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Contents

Note from the Editor

When we become perfect, so will *The Baseball Research Journal*, at which point we won't need it anymore, because we'll already know everything. And it won't need us. It won't need us to read it—to examine it for holes in its swing and glitches in its mechanics or to let it know that, if it drops a fly ball or fails to run out a ground ball, we'll be watching.

If this journal and those who publish in it are players, and imperfect players, who have holes in their swings and glitches in their mechanics and who are capable of dropping a fly ball (but who, may it be, always run hard to first base), who are the rest of us? We're their coaches. We're their fans. If on occasion we lose our temper and get impatient with them, it's only because we're on their side and want them to get a hit every time they're at bat and to get every batter out when they're in the field.

We cheer and we yell, but the players don't hear as much of that as either they or we would like. Up to now, the acoustics here in Bob Davids Memorial Park have involved mostly an occasional corrections page at the back of *BRJ*. There we duly make note of errors committed by our team in recent issues. It's not sufficient, though it's necessary, a necessary component of the larger plan for making our thoughts on our team's performance audible to them and to SABR nation as a whole. We want to be heard.

To that end, consider participating in the newly established correspondence column, which you will find on the next page. You can call it letters to the editor, but it's really correspondence, because the expectation is that, where appropriate, the author will respond to the reader who has taken issue with something in the author's article. Even the part of the exchange that is what the reader has written is not really a letter to the editor, because it's not really addressed to him (at least I hope it isn't, unless it's praise for a job well done), and so think of the column as a forum. It's like the media room outside the clubhouse after the game, except that you get to argue with the players behind the microphones, not just ask them questions. I take it back—it's like sports talk radio. You're the caller, and the author whose work you want to praise, blame, or analyze is the player who is either with me in studio or on another line.

There is a call screener, of course. To get on air, you have to have something worth saying and you have to say it coherently enough. Forceful is good. Belligerent isn't. Tone of voice counts. The correspondence column has standards. If you think you've been excluded from it unfairly, write a letter to the editor.

Or, if you got worked up and after a couple of days find that your commentary has grown longer than the article that so exercised you in the first place, you can ask to put on the uniform and be added to the roster of SABR authors. Tryouts are ongoing. Baseball research tends to answer or build on previous baseball research, because baseball research is a team sport, meaning that it's competition and cooperation in roughly equal parts.

We learn from watching others play the game. Read the correspondence column that follows this note from your editor. Bill Deane argues that Randy and Jami Fisher are wrong about the origin of hand signals in baseball. They answer him, probably not to his satisfaction but in a manner that advances the conversation. As you make your way through the issue, you'll eventually come to the cover story, wherein Dan Levitt, Mark Armour, and Matthew Levitt draw on some impressive archival digging and scrutiny of new evidence to advance a different conversation, about Harry Frazee, that was begun outside SABR but by a team of authors, Glenn Stout and Richard Johnson, who play in the same league.

The exchange between Phil Birnbaum and Bill James about clutch hitting is something you'll want to not just read but read again, and closely. Sure, they disagree, and in that, you might say, they're opponents, not teammates. But teammates often vie for a single roster spot—one plays his position like this, the other like that, and one way is better for the team than the other. Let them fight it out until the answer is clear, which may be never. That's fine. That kind of competition is healthy, and the team is better for it.

—Nick Frankovich

Correspondence

A perusal of the 2008 *National Pastime* leads me to comment on one of its articles.

On pages 35–39 is an article by Randy Fisher and Jami N. Fisher, "The Deaf and the Origin of Hand Signals in Baseball." The article strongly suggests that deaf players were responsible for the hand signals used by umpires, and its premise is that players may have developed hand signals for the benefit of umpires rather than the other way around: "Arguably, it is more plausible that deaf players in professional baseball taught their managers, coaches, and even umpires the new signs, and not vice versa." Later in the article, the Fishers state that "the formal incorporation of hand signals into baseball had, in addition to its logistical value as a means of keeping players informed of calls by the umpire, the unintended advantage of signaling to fans as well what the calls were."

In fact, the overwhelming evidence indicates that hand signals were intentionally developed for those fans and that deaf players had nothing to do with them. The 1909 *Spalding's Official Base Ball Guide* had a full-page essay entitled "Semaphore Signals by the Umpires." It reads in part:

> Two or three years ago Base Ball critics in the East and West began to agitate the question of signalling by the umpires to announce their decisions. At first the judges of play did not want to signal [but] now there is not an umpire [who doesn't use his] arms to signal. If he did not, two-thirds of the spectators at the immense crowds would be wholly at sea as to what was transpiring on the field.

The essay includes no mention of Dummy Hoy, who had retired from pro baseball only five years earlier, or of any other deaf player.

The idea of umpires using hand signals was proposed at various times in the half-century before this essay; I cite these in my upcoming book on baseball mythology. The common theme is that none of these suggestions were made by or because of deaf players, and they were almost always proposed for the benefit of fans, who did not have the luxury of electronic scoreboards or public-address systems to aid in following the game.

— Bill Deane
Milford, N.Y.

Randy Fisher and Jami N. Fisher reply:

In his letter to the editor, Bill Deane states that our article "strongly suggests that . . . players may have developed hand signals for the benefit of umpires, rather than the other way around." We would like to point out that we are not suggesting that deaf players incorporated hand signals in order to benefit umpires specifically; rather, hand signals were originally used by coaches so that deaf players could be as informed of the calls made by the umpires as were their hearing counterparts. Indeed, the thrust of the argument is that the origin of hand signals can be connected to deaf ballplayers and that therefore recognition and credit should be given to them for such influence.

There is strong etymological evidence that hand signals are derived from ASL signs, reinforcing our original argument that hand signals originated with deaf players. As we relate in our article, two specific umpires' signals—for "out" and "safe"—have direct etymological connections to their ASL counterparts. While there are many ASL translations for the English word *out*, depending on the meaning of the word in English, the ASL sign for "out" that matches the umpires' signal for "out" is the ASL sign used in the context of competition. While it is possible that the word *out*— in its competitive meaning—was incorporated into ASL from an umpire-initiated hand signal, the likelihood is quite small that such a pervasive word as *safe*— which in ASL has the same movement, palm orientation, and location on the body as does the sign "free"—was incorporated into ASL from baseball and then applied to most English-translated meanings without variation on the sign.

A third-base coach makes a "strike" hand signal to Dummy Hoy.

In addition, while we regret that this was not included in our original article, we would like to point to the accompanying illustration from the *St. Louis Globe-Democrat* in 1891, as evidence of the connection between deaf ballplayers and hand signals. The illustration depicts a third-base coach making a "strike" hand signal to William "Dummy" Hoy, a deaf ballplayer.

Roland Hemond

If You Can't Take Part in a Sport, Be One Anyway, Will You?

Mort Bloomberg

Roland Hemond has made lasting and unprecedented contributions to professional baseball with seven major-league teams. Born in 1929 to parents of French-Canadian heritage in Central Falls, Rhode Island, Hemond is one of the industry's most respected and experienced executives.

Hemond is also a member of one of baseball's most distinguished multigenerational families. His wife, Margo, is the daughter of John Quinn, who as general manager for 28 years with the Braves and 13 with the Phillies won three National League pennants—including the flag atop the pole in right center field throughout the 1949 season next to Braves Field's Jury Box—and one World Series championship in 1957.

Margo's grandfather was Bob Quinn, a baseball magnate with four major-league teams, who during his playing days in the 1890s caught for several minor-league clubs, some of whom he managed. As president and part owner of the Red Sox from 1923 to 1932, Bob Quinn was the bridge between owners Harry Frazee and Tom Yawkey (see article by Levitt et al. at page 35), and from 1936 to 1941 he served in the Braves' front office. When his son John, the Braves farm director, became the general manager in 1945, his father took over as farm director for a year before his appointment as director of the National Baseball Hall of Fame.

Roland and Margo's son Bob is part owner of the Sacramento River Cats, one of the great success stories in minor-league baseball. Two other children, Susan and Jay, have also worked in baseball. Additionally, Margo's brother Bob had stints as general manager for the New York Yankees, Cincinnati Reds, and San Francisco Giants and spent fourteen years in the Cleveland Indians' and Milwaukee Brewers' front offices; her brother Jack was general manager of six minor-league teams.

ROLAND HEMOND'S CAREER IN MLB

Roland's extraordinary career at the major-league level began when he joined the Boston Braves late in the year in 1951, after an apprenticeship with their Eastern League affiliate, the Hartford Chiefs. He worked as assistant secretary to John Mullen, who ran the Braves' farm system (and would continue in that capacity after the franchise was transplanted to Milwaukee, remaining with the organization through 1960).

Fred Haney, the Braves' manager, worked with Hemond during the club's 1957 and 1958 championship seasons and later, as first general manager of the Los Angeles Angels, hired him as scouting and farm director in 1961. After a successful career there, Hemond was named general manager of the Chicago White Sox on September 14, 1970, and charged with the responsibility of rebuilding a franchise in decline. Hemond was named Major League Baseball's Executive of the Year in 1972 by *The Sporting News* and again, this time by United Press International, in 1983, when he was the architect of a White Sox team that won the American League Western Division title (99–63) by a margin of 20 games (setting a record, now broken, for the era since divisions were introduced in 1969) over the second-place Kansas City Royals.

Left to right: *Roland Hemond; John Mullen, the Braves' farm and scouting director (1951–60), who hired Hemond in September 1951; Harry Minor, player-manager, Wellsville (N.Y.) Braves, later becoming (1961) a scout for the New York Mets; John Quinn, general manager, Milwaukee Braves.*

On departing the White Sox in 1986, after fifteen years there, he worked in New York in the commissioner's office, as Peter Ueberroth's special assistant. His next stop was as general manager of the Baltimore Orioles (1988–95). The 1989 team improved 32½ games in the standings from the previous season, and again Hemond was named Executive of the Year by *The Sporting News*. He left Baltimore after the 1995 campaign to work for the next five seasons as senior vice president of the Arizona Diamondbacks.

On November 30, 2000, Roland rejoined the White Sox to serve as executive advisor to newly appointed general manager Ken Williams, and with all of Chicagoland he celebrated the team's World Series victory in 2005. He continued to advise and assist Williams until July 2007, when the Diamondbacks brought Hemond back to Phoenix, his family's home for the past twelve years, and named him special assistant to team president Derrick Hall.

In 1992, Hemond, the chief architect of the Arizona Fall League (AFL), saw his work on that project come to fruition. The AFL serves as a graduate school for professional baseball's top prospects. Now in its seventeenth season, the AFL has clearly paid dividends, as alumni of the league have collected Rookie of the Year honors in fourteen of the past seventeen seasons through 2008. In 2008 both winners, Geovany Soto of the Cubs and Evan Longoria of the Rays, had played in the AFL.

Hemond is president of the Association of Professional Ballplayers of America, a nonprofit organization that assists former and current players who are in need. He helped found the Professional Baseball Scouts Foundation, which assists long-time scouts in need of special support. In recent years he has worked to help players pursue their education online. At last count, more than 150 profes- sional ballplayers have taken this path, for which Hemond was awarded an honorary degree by the University of Phoenix in 2006.

NATIONAL RECOGNITION

A nationally recognized ambassador of the game, Hemond was crowned "King of Baseball" by Minor League Baseball at their Winter Meetings banquet in 2001. In 2003 he became the first off-the-field recipient of the prestigious Branch Rickey Award, given to baseball people who contribute selflessly to their community and serve as strong role models for others.

In addition, four annual awards from four different organizations are named in his honor:
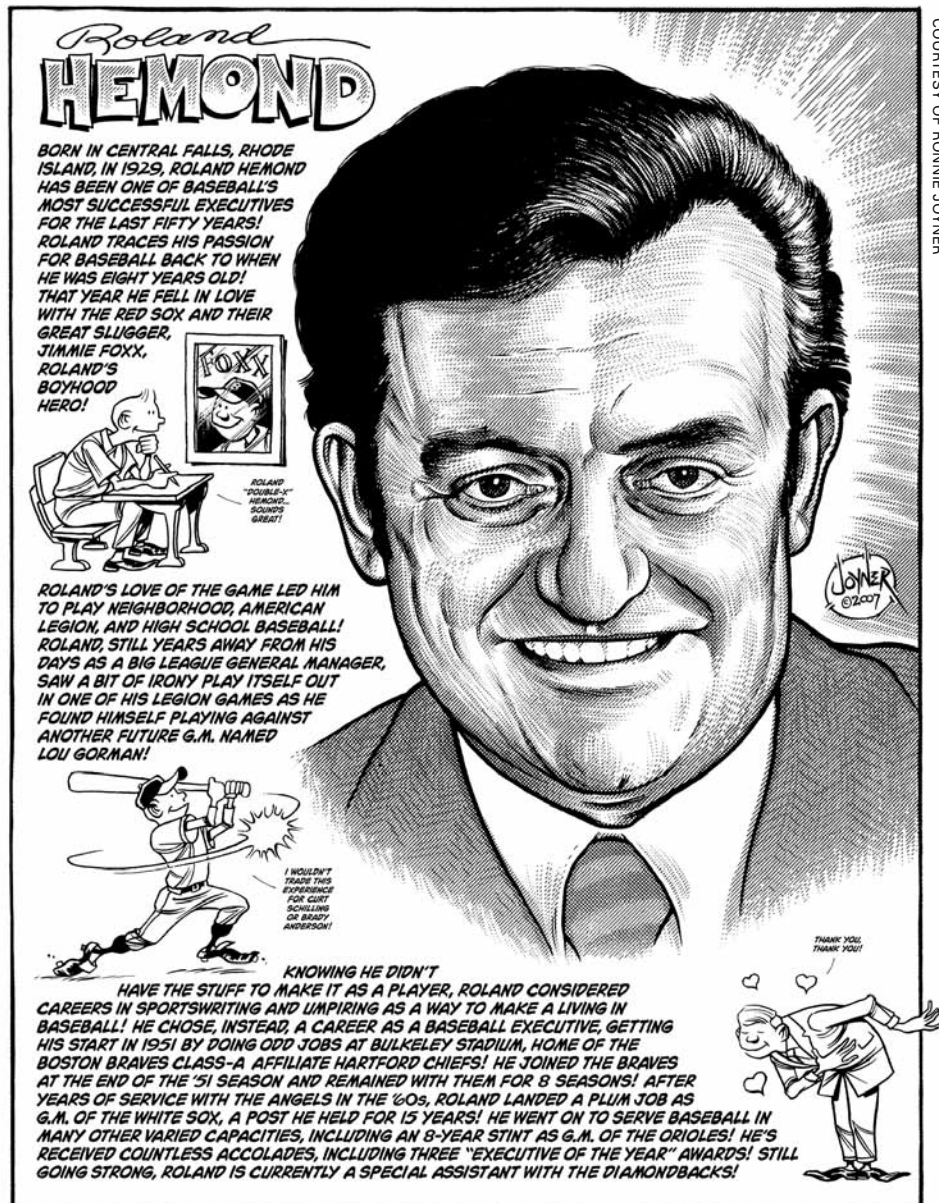
Ronnie Joyner, whose portraits grace the collection of the Boston Braves Historical Association, recently added Roland Hemond to his list of distinguished subjects.

- from SABR, for meritorious service in scouting or in working with scouts (established 2001)

- from the Arizona Fall League, for longstanding service to professional baseball and a leadership role within the AFL (established 2001)

- from the Chicago White Sox, for dedication to helping others through notable self-sacrifice (established 2003)

- from *Baseball America*, for contributions to scouting and player development (established 2003)

And by way of saying Welcome Home to a man who got his start in baseball when the Braves were still in Boston and whose accomplishments off the field can be said to rival those of Spahn and Sain on it, the Boston Braves Historical Association inducted Hemond into its Hall of Fame in October 2007.

Fortunately for those who would like to enhance their store of baseball knowledge with some insight into this genuinely humble man, who is inclined not to talk about himself, many who have known him well over the years have been quick to describe his achievements and virtues. "I've known Roland for over fifty years," Commissioner Bud Selig says of him, "and he is the classic baseball man. Nobody loves the game more."

HEMOND RECALLS

Roland Hemond joined the Boston Braves at the major-league level in 1951. In an interview in 2006, he recounted what it was like to be a baseball fan when there was no television and no sports coverage to the point of oversaturation.

The backdrop for the interview was Encanto Park, a few miles west of downtown Phoenix. It's a public park, old and sprawling and in some ways spartan. It was quiet on the morning we sat down to chat at a picnic table. The locale was ideal, affording a flashback to Braves Field in its final year of occupancy before Lou Perini moved the team to Milwaukee.

Here are some warm, engaging glimpses into when Hemond's lifelong love affair with baseball and baseball people began.

My buddies and I would hang around the corner drugstore talking baseball and couldn't wait for the latest edition of the *Boston Daily Record* to be delivered. I remember spreading the paper on the floor at home and lying face-down, just devouring the box scores. The stories in those days were so much more descriptive of the plays—the description of a game-saving play by Dom DiMaggio, for instance. It was almost like listening to the games on radio, as you picture everything that's taking place. The stories today don't go into as much depth because it's assumed that people saw them on TV. But in those days, you had to picture plays in your mind. Since the writers back then didn't necessarily go to the clubhouse for postgame comments, they would go into great detail about, let's say, a game-ending double play. How it went from Eddie Miller deep in the hole at shortstop to Bama Rowell at second and over to Buddy Hassett at first base. It was also great reading about the trades that were made and why—as it is today. You became engulfed in it.

Radio added a new dimension to Hemond's love for baseball. In those days games generally began at 3 P.M., and as soon as school let out he would rush home to listen to the latter part of the game. Of all the announcers he heard as a youngster, Jim Britt made the most lasting impression.

He would end the broadcast saying, "If you can't take part in a sport, be one anyway, will you?" That was his closing comment. He had a great, melodious-type voice and actually announced the home games of both the Braves and the Red Sox. You became attached to him as well, and the fact that he was the voice of both helped to create a strong interest in the two clubs. Another announcer, Bump Hadley, I remember because I saw him pitch on opening day at McCoy Stadium in Pawtucket, Rhode Island, when the park opened in 1942, the year after his major-league career was over.

Hemond played one game in high school against Chet Nichols, who as a rookie with the Braves would go on to win the National League ERA crown in 1951. "I always kidded Chet that I hit a line drive off him to the third baseman so hard I never left the box. But to see him pitch in the majors after I played high school against him was a big thrill for me."

Hemond talks about two individuals from his youth who meant a great deal to him.

When I was playing on Sunday League, Boys Club, and Legion teams, my great friend Bob Brown of Central Falls, Rhode Island [not to be

confused with the New York Yankees third base-man and American League president], was the shortstop and I was the second baseman, so I was Bobby Doerr and he was Johnny Pesky. I told Bobby later on that he didn't have to worry about me taking his job.

In addition to Bob Brown, one of the best friends in my life was Leo Labossiere, who was a great all-around athlete in baseball and basketball at Providence College and had been my high-school coach as well as helping me learn the funda-mentals of both sports. It's amazing how great friends become very successful in their field and the friendships endure throughout one's life. Both Bob and Leo are very special in my life.

In 1948, Hemond was a storekeeper first class in the Coast Guard, handling pay records at Floyd Ben-nett Field in Brooklyn.

I saw more Red Sox games at Yankee Stadium than I did at Ebbets Field seeing the Braves. The Red Sox kept losing in New York. They had a bad record there through the years and some sad memories. It was a pretty good haul for me from Floyd Bennett Field to see the BoSox take on the mighty Yankees. We had to take the bus to the Flatbush Avenue subway and then all the way to the north side in the Bronx to Yankee Stadium, but I made it as often as I possibly could. That vast left field in Yankee Stadium would do the Red Sox in because Doerr and Vern Stephens and right-handed pull hitters like them were victim-ized by Death Valley, as they called it. Left field was a lot deeper in Yankee Stadium then than it is now. Sox long-ball hitters paid the price of Fen-way versus the Stadium because they couldn't make the necessary adjustments when they played in New York. So the Yankees would pitch around Ted Williams a lot at the House That Ruth Built. And, as much as I loved Doerr and Stephens, they made lots of long outs there.

The Red Sox held a unique place in Hemond's heart partly because the first major-league game he saw was at Fenway Park in 1938. His first favorite player was Jimmie Foxx, league MVP that year. Ted Williams later became his baseball idol, with two of Williams's teammates—Doerr and Pesky—close be-hind. Notwithstanding what was then regarded as a long trip from Central Falls to Boston, he went to

Hemond, currently in the front office of the Arizona Diamondbacks, has been named Executive of the Year three times in his more than fifty years in MLB. Chief architect of the Arizona Fall League, he is president of the Association of Professional Ballplayers of America and helped found the Professional Baseball Scouts Association.

three or four games at Fenway every year. By contrast, before joining the Braves, in 1951, he had been to Braves Field a total of maybe six times.

The first time he saw the Braves in person was special, though, because it was

a Pawtucket Boys' Club day where we went on the bus as a group to Braves Field. George "High-pockets" Kelly flipped a baseball to the top of the dugout that rolled to me. That made an impres-sion—that the Braves coach wanted to give the ball to a fan, and I happened to be the lucky one to get it.

Not one to collect souvenirs, however, Hemond has no idea what happened to Kelly's ball. "In those days you didn't necessarily save the balls; you played with them."

A couple of other times I sat in the right-field Jury Box. Devoted fans of Tommy Holmes were there on a regular basis. I remember Lolly Hopkins; she was from Providence and I used to see her, decked out and with her megaphone, rooting for the Braves, always seated behind their third-base dugout, like a fixture. It wasn't too difficult to get a good seat, and you could move around and get a better seat as the game progressed. There were too many empty seats, unfortunately, and that's what led to the Braves moving to Milwaukee. To

me, Braves Field had the appearance of an old ballpark, even then. It was like turning back the clock. At that time, I guess it would have been hard for me to imagine it compared with the other major-league parks of the day, but, as you reflect, Braves Field looked like it was in its final stages. It didn't have much appeal. And the wind blowing in off the Charles River affected the hitters. A lot of times you were disappointed with the long fly ball that you thought might go out, but they seemed to stay in too much for the Braves.

There was more glamour and excitement at Fenway because the crowds were better, with Williams and Doerr and those guys being real attractions. I don't remember as many spectacular plays at Braves Field as they would have at Fenway. Sam Jethroe suffered some misadventures covering center field because of the wind at the Wigwam, and the arc lights—which I'm sure weren't as strong as today—hadn't taken hold yet when games began at twilight. While at Fenway, Dom DiMaggio never seemed to misjudge a fly ball. He could really roam and play shallow and go to the deep parts of Fenway and make excellent plays everywhere.

Always a student of the game, Hemond had this analysis about ballplayers' gloves.

Today the equipment is different, so there are more diving plays than they made then. A real good running catch by Dominic was applauded and considered like a diving play today. The gloves weren't as large to make those diving plays, so if they dove it probably didn't stick in the glove after they had made this gallant attempt. So the players held their feet more often and made shoestring catches without somersaulting or diving. You could see the evolution of the game, the size of the athletes as well—not that they would not have had the ability to do what they're doing today in defensive plays, but they didn't have the equipment.

The one game during the 1948 season that stands out the most is when the Red Sox lost that playoff game against Cleveland, 8–3, and by the third or fourth inning Lou Boudreau—who had a big day—and Ken Keltner knocked in a bunch of runs. Gene Bearden pitched a very fine game.

Denny Galehouse started for the Sox, which provoked controversy and a lot of second-guessing. The joke was they had picked the wrong man. Even though he was the team's top pitcher that year, Mel Parnell had been used a lot down the stretch and would have had to come back on two days' rest. Besides, Joe McCarthy, Hall of Fame manager from the Yankees, certainly had his reasons for doing it. Bernard Hogan, who was a warrant officer [in the Coast Guard] heading the finance department, let me listen to the game while working in my office that afternoon in Brooklyn. He knew I was kind of devastated when the Indians just won handily that day, with no contest. All of us in New England were heartbroken with the end result of it, because we were hoping for an all-Boston World Series.

I have some fine recollections of the Braves because I was rooting for them as well. Bob Elliott was the prominent player. Acquired from the Pittsburgh Pirates in 1947 [he was acquired in 1946 but would not debut with the team until 1947], he was known as "Mr. Team." They put that tag on him and he won the league's MVP award that year, as he stood out as the big run producer, power hitter, and RBI man and played very well at third, too. Elliott easily could have been named MVP again in 1948, for he carried the Braves on his shoulders that season with both his offensive and defensive ability. He had an outstanding year. Outfielder Jeff Heath was purchased from the St. Louis Browns and had a real productive year. It was unfortunate that he broke his ankle the last weekend of the season, sliding into home plate against Brooklyn after the National League pennant had been clinched. The Braves could have used his big bat in the World Series. Johnny Sain, Warren Spahn, and Vern Bickford did fine jobs. Lost among the feature stories was Nelson Potter. He had come from the Philadelphia Athletics at pretty much the tail end of his career and had some real clutch relief-pitching performances for the ballclub.

When asked whom he would have cheered for had Boston's teams met in the fall classic, Hemond made his allegiance perfectly clear. "I would have been rooting for the Red Sox. I was more of a Red Sox fan. There's no doubt about that."

In later years Hemond became good friends with several members of the 1948 National League cham-

Hemond and Lew Burdette, right-handed pitcher for the Braves (1951–63), who during the period 1956–61 won 114 regular-season games and, in the 1957 World Series, gave up only two runs in three complete-game wins. After retiring as a player in 1967, Burdette served as the Braves pitching coach (1972–73). He died at age 80 in February 2007. A fan of both Boston clubs in his youth but partial to the Red Sox, Hemond became friends with some legendary Braves during his years with the organization in Boston and then Milwaukee.

pionship team—Spahn, Sain, Holmes, Sibby Sisti, Earl Torgeson, and Tommie Ferguson (batboy). No Braves player ever voiced to him any preference for an all-Boston World Series. Nor does he have recollection of anyone saying they were rooting for the Red Sox to lose to the Indians. "I never heard them say like, boy, we despised the other club. I don't think they had that kind of rivalry or intensity."

The top hitter among all regulars in the pitching-dominant 1948 World Series was Torgeson—7 for 18, good for a .389 average. The Braves' first baseman had other abilities that he put to good use on and off the field. "Earl liked to fight," Hemond noted.

There was one [game]—it had to be in 1952, because I was there—and I was rooting for the Braves and Torgy got a base hit. Sal Yvars was the catcher for the New York Giants. He evidently didn't like Torgeson and vice versa. So when Torgeson had circled the bases and scored a run, he got back to the dugout and someone said, "Yvars broke your bat over home plate after you got that hit." And I remember Earl taking his eyeglasses off and putting them on the top step of the dugout, and he's charging across the field and Yvars is taking off his equipment for that break in the inning. Bickford was just a couple of steps behind Torgy and all of a sudden Yvars looked up and Torgy pounded him. Knocked him all over off the second step of the Giants dugout. He was getting even for the broken bat. That was Earl. A real character.

As many baseball personnel know firsthand, Hemond's passion for the game has never left him and probably never will.

By having a passion for it, you have more recollections of things that happened because you lived them for the moment vividly and stored them in your memory bank. Whatever people do in any walk of life, if they don't have a passion for what they're doing, then they lack the memories, because they didn't appreciate or live the moment with excitement and enthusiasm. That's why every day is an adventure if you make it such, and you can make it more if you make it such. I can't help but smile when I'm talking with you because of all the pleasurable moments that you enjoy in being part of something that means so much to you, and you find that it means a lot to so many people who follow baseball, and you feel sorry for those who have not had the opportunity to enjoy it as I have and to have lived and met the people that I admired from afar as a fan, and then all of a sudden you find yourself knowing them as human beings and great people. ∎

For further biographical information on Roland Hemond, please see his biography at BioProject (The Baseball Biography Project), http://bioproj.sabr.org.

National Cartwright Day and the First Televised Major-League Game

Frank Ardolino

On Saturday, August 26, 1939, the Brooklyn Dodgers and Cincinnati Reds played a doubleheader at Ebbets Field. The opening game is noted for being the first televised major-league game and for the celebrations afterward in honor of Alexander Cartwright Jr., who had been admitted into the Hall of Fame that year, which Major League Baseball had designated as its centennial.[1] Cartwright moved to Hawaii in 1849, and his standing as a baseball pioneer was eventually overshadowed by Abner Doubleday, whom the Mills Commission in 1908 certified as the inventor of baseball. In moving to the faraway island kingdom, Cartwright had in effect obscured his contribution to the development of baseball.

Perhaps Cartwright's personality also served to undercut his stature as a pioneer. When he died on July 12, 1892, an elaborate funeral procession was conducted to honor him, but in his obituaries no mention was made of his baseball activities in New York and Hawaii.[2] Although Cartwright certainly was public-spirited and exercised considerable power behind the scenes, he was not one to seek public office or publicize his achievements. Cartwright might have been more assertive about his role had he been able to anticipate debates about baseball's origin. "Could great grandfather have foreseen the development of his game to such proportions," his great-grandson William Cart-wright said, "I am sure he would have clearly set down for generations all the details of the beginnings of this sport and saved many historians a great deal of conjecture."[3] When the newly created Hall of Fame was making plans to mark the centennial through the induction of great players and important figures, Cartwright was not on the list. After his grandson Bruce Cartwright Jr. sent the Hall of Fame committee evidence of his grandfather's importance, Alexander Cartwright's name was added. He was elected in 1938, and induction ceremonies were held in June of the following year.[4]

Meanwhile, in Honolulu, a Cartwright plaque, con-

National Baseball Hall of Fame Library, Cooperstown, N.Y.

Alexander Cartwright (1820–92), baseball pioneer, was inducted into the Hall of Fame in 1938.

sisting of an incised figure of him and a list of his baseball accomplishments, was presented at a ballgame at Honolulu Stadium; a graveside service honoring him was held, and the Hall of Fame induction ceremony in Cooperstown was broadcast on radio. In the *Honolulu Advertiser*, a full-page ad saluting Cartwright "as beloved *kamaaina* (native) and founder of baseball" affirmed the relationship between baseball, America, and Hawaii: "National Base Ball Week Is Being Celebrated by Fans all over America. Here in Hawaii, the National Game Has Taken Hold in a Manner That Serves as Much as Any Other to Indicate the True spirit of our Americanism."[5]

At Cooperstown, a replica of the Honolulu Cartwright plaque was unveiled and a pageant about his cross-country journey in 1849 was performed. William M. Beattie, curator of the Baseball Hall of Fame, saluted Cartwright as the "Father of Modern Baseball," who formalized the rules of the game and was the subject of one of the "most popular and interesting" exhibits at Cooperstown.[6]

Two and a half months later, in August, the centennial celebrations continued as National Cartwright Day was celebrated in Honolulu, at Ebbets Field and other major-league ballparks, and in Cooperstown. In Honolulu, Cartwright was honored with ceremonies at city hall, where William Cartwright, his great-grandson, formally presented the Cartwright plaque to the city. He said quite simply, "It is my hope that his plaque . . . will impress upon the minds of all those who see it the two prime factors great-grandfather had in mind in developing the game of baseball—good sportsmanship and fair play."[7]

Greetings were sent by Acting Mayor Akana to Larry MacPhail, business manager of the Dodgers, on behalf of the people of Honolulu. At Honolulu Stadium, before the game between the Chinese and Braves in the "Cartwright Playoff Series" of the Hawaii Baseball League, two flags (American and Hawaiian) and a

Cartwright, a volunteer firefighter, posing here with hat, badge, and trumpet, was saluted as the "Father of Modern Baseball" by the curator of the Hall of Fame in 1939, the centennial of Abner Doubleday's supposed founding of baseball. The case for Cartwright's role in the development of baseball was thought by many to be stronger than the case for Doubleday's role.

15-foot banner representing the Cartwright Series were raised at right-center-field flagpoles located behind the football stands. Abe Lewis Jr., a baseball pioneer in Hawaii and teammate of Herbert Hoover at Stanford University, was the speaker and master of ceremonies.[8]

In the major leagues, Hawaiian ceremonies were planned in all parks, which consisted of pineapple-juice toasts among the players, leis presented by barefoot girls in grass skirts to each manager, the broadcasting of the *Hawaii Calls* radio show, and the presentation of a summary of Cartwright's life. In addition, leis were sent to the mayor of each city where games were played. At Cooperstown, a man impersonating Cartwright led a parade to Doubleday Field, where one hundred players wearing leis exchanged pineapple-juice toasts. The arrangements for the double ceremony in Brooklyn and Cooperstown were handled by the Honolulu Chamber of Commerce and the advertising agency N. W. Ayer and Son in New York.[9]

At Ebbets Field, 33,535 fans saw the league-leading Reds win the first game 5–2. The Dodgers won the second game 6–1 behind Hugh Casey to cut the Reds' lead to 4½ games over the Cardinals. (The Dodgers were 12½ back, and the Reds would win the pennant in the end.) Between games, territorial treasurer William McGonagle and three Hawaiian girls hung leis around the necks of the players after a pineapple-juice drinking ceremony at home plate. McGonagle spoke about Cartwright's life and delivered greetings from Governor Poindexter of Hawaii. After these ceremonies, players from both teams autographed a large photo of Cartwright. These activities were broadcast over the radio along with the telecast. Both the *New York Times* and the *Honolulu Advertiser*, perhaps overcome by the occasion, mistakenly reported that Cartwright "was born in Honolulu, hence the Hawaiian touch."[10]

The TV coverage by NBC's experimental station W2XBS, based in the Empire State Building, consisted of two cameras, one behind home plate and the other in an upper deck behind third base, where announcer Red Barber was stationed. He broadcast the game using earphones, which connected him with the director, Burke Crotty, who was located in a truck outside the park. There was no monitor, and Crotty relayed to Barber what the camera was looking at. The range of the broadcast was only fifty miles, and the audience consisted of probably no more than a hundred households, but the coverage marked a significant advance over the first baseball game of any kind ever televised—Princeton versus Columbia, broadcast by NBC on May 17 from Columbia's Baker Field in upper Manhattan, with one camera and Bill Stern as the announcer.[11] The inchoate quality of the Dodger telecast was captured by the remark that "at times it was possible to catch a fleeting glimpse of the ball as it sped from the pitcher's hand toward home plate."[12] Cartwright, who throughout his life strove to avoid publicity, was now fêted as a national and Hawaiian hero at the first televised game in major-league history. What would he have thought? ∎

First televised baseball game, between Princeton and Columbia, at Baker Field in upper Manhattan, May 17, 1939. The game was broadcast by NBC with one camera. The first televised major-league game would follow three months later, on August 26, "National Cartwright Day," at Ebbets Field in Brooklyn, where the Reds won 5–2. Red Barber was the announcer. Ceremonies in honor of Cartwright followed the game.

Notes

1. In light of the recent debunking of Cartwright's role in the development of baseball, detractors will no doubt see the elaborate celebrations for him in 1939 as highly ironic. However, it is the purpose of this article to recreate the historical context of the first televised game and not to debate the nature of Cartwright's actual contribution.
2. *The Friend* 50, no. 8 (August 1892): 61; *Hawaiian Gazette*, 19 July 1892, p. 9; *Pacific Commercial Advertiser*, 13 July 1892, p. 1.
3. "Cartwright Memorial Unveiled at the Stadium," *Honolulu Advertiser*, 12 June 1939, p. 12.
4. "Baseball Hall of Fame Niche Voted Alexander Cartwright," *Honolulu Advertiser*, 4 October 1938, p. 2. Unfortunately, Bruce died before his grandfather was inducted.
5. *Honolulu Advertiser*, 12 June 1939, p. 8.
6. Loui Leong Hop, "Long Hops With Loui," *Honolulu Star Bulletin*, 26 August 1939, p. 12.
7. "Honolulu Pays Tribute to Father of Baseball," *Honolulu Advertiser*, 27 August 1939, p. 12.
8. "Cartwright Day to Be Celebrated by Hawaii Loop at Stadium Today," *Honolulu Advertiser*, 26 August 1939, p. 12; *Honolulu Star Bulletin*, 28 August 1939, p. 11.
9. "Cartwright Day, with Leis, on Television," *Honolulu Advertiser*, 27 August 1939, p. 11.
10. "Dodgers Triumph Over Reds by 6–1 After 5–2 Setback," *New York Times*, 27 August 1939, p. 1; "Dodgers and Reds Split Double Bill," *Honolulu Advertiser*, 27 August 1939, p. 4; the *Advertiser* reprinted the article from the *Times* verbatim.
11. Richard Goldstein, *Superstars and Screwballs: 100 Years of Brooklyn Baseball* (New York: Penguin, 1991), 206–7.
12. "Games Are Televised: Major League Baseball Makes Its Radio Camera Debut," *Honolulu Advertiser*, 27 August 1939, p. 4.

George Sisler

A Close Look at Vision Problems that Derailed Him

Rick Huhn, Jim Provenzale, David A. Goss

There is no question that, when a hitter takes stock of his prize possessions, the eyes have it. In the early twentieth century, the great ones such as Cobb, Hornsby, and Lajoie refrained from reading newspapers or books. They even stayed away from movie houses, believing they were protecting their vision. One time shortly after his own return to baseball following a two-week hospital stay, Babe Ruth (or more likely his ghostwriter) saluted the comeback of a fellow ballplayer who had suffered from problems with his vision. "I know what it is to be helpless," he wrote, "but I am thankful there isn't anything wrong with my eyes."[1]

The comeback player Ruth was referring to was George Sisler of the St. Louis Browns. In the fall of 1922, Sisler had just completed another banner year, having hit .420, the second time in three years that the first baseman hit over .400. He and Ruth were by most accounts the best ballplayers in the American League, if not in all of professional baseball. That year Sisler was the top vote getter in a poll of sportswriters delegated to name the junior circuit's most valuable player. And so the entire sports world was stunned six months later when Sisler was unable to answer the call to spring training because of a sinus infection that followed a bout with influenza. In short order he developed vision problems that rendered him unable to play ball at all in 1923 and arguably reduced his ability to hit a baseball for the remainder of his career.

Contemporary newspaper accounts mentioned that Sisler suffered from a sinus infection, or sinusitis, that affected his vision, but they did not explain how the infection caused the impairment to his vision. Over the years, the exact cause of his vision problems and any relationship to his sinusitis in early 1923 has remained a matter of conjecture. Our purpose in this article is to analyze the available information and use it to offer a reasonable diagnosis that provides a plausible explanation for Sisler's malady.

As Sisler's actual medical records are unavailable, the newspaper reports of the day, quoting various treating physicians, take on added significance. They suggest not only what the nature of the problem may have been but also what it was not. We examined the reports to determine whether the vision problems Sisler experienced in 1923 involved the internal structure of the eye itself, the optic nerve (as some have speculated), other nerves of the eye, and/or the muscles of the eye.

In a report by the Associated Press (April 10, 1923), an oculist treating Sisler was quoted as saying that "the star's vision was normal in each eye." The report said further that the oculist emphasized the word *each*, indicating that visual acuity was normal but leaving open the possibility that coordination of the eye movements was impaired.[2] Therefore, it appears that the problem was not in the retina of the eye or in the optic nerve. The retina, the structure at the inside of the back of the eye, contains light-sensing cells and the nerve-cell circuitry that leads into the optic nerve. The optic nerve carries the nerve impulses from the eye back to the brain, where it is processed into our sense of vision. If there had been damage to the retina of one eye or to the optic nerve coming from one eye, vision would not have been normal in that eye.

An article in the *St. Louis Post-Dispatch* (March 27, 1923) mentioned that, in addition to the sinus condition, Sisler had experienced a "muscular disturbance."[3] In typewritten memoirs that Sisler prepared for his family some years later, he wrote that after the 1922 season he "had a case of double vision."[4] The medical term for this is diplopia. "I didn't quite realize what was happening," Sisler recalled, "until one day when I was driving I thought I saw two cars in the other lane. There was only one, and I knew something was drastically wrong."[5] In the *Post-Dispatch* in March 1924, sportswriter J. Roy Stockton noted that Sisler's "eye was noticeably crossed" in October 1923 and that Sisler had told him that he "couldn't see one baseball."[6] The condition that could explain all of these reports is a disturbance of one of the muscles that move the eye.

Each eye is attached to six muscles, the extraocular muscles, which move the eye. Each of these muscles is supplied by one of three nerves—the oculomotor, trochlear, and abducens nerves, which are also known as cranial nerves III, IV, and VI, respectively. The most likely cause of double vision in adulthood is diminished function in one of the extraocular muscles, which could result from damage to the muscle itself or from damage to one of the corresponding cranial

nerves. Whether the diplopia is caused by muscular damage or nerve damage, the resulting impairment can be variable in duration and followed by either complete or only partial recovery.

A second issue in Sisler's case is the exact relationship of his diplopia to his sinusitis. It is difficult to accurately determine more than eighty years after the fact, but we can make some reasonable assumptions. In April 1923, Sisler was reported to have been hospitalized for surgery for an "inflamed ethmoid sinus."[7] Exact details of the sinus surgery are lacking. Most likely, the procedure was designed to create an opening in the affected sinus to allow the contents of the sinus to drain. However, Sisler's diplopia did not resolve until almost a year later, providing clues to what the cause of his diplopia might have been.

If the sinusitis and diplopia are in fact related (as physicians at the time assumed), two possible major mechanisms for Sisler's diplopia come to the fore. Both are based on the assumption that the sinus infection spread beyond the confines of the infected sinus.

The first major possibility is that sinusitis produced an expansile infected mass within one of the sinuses adjacent to the orbit and that this mass either expanded the sinus or broke through the wall of the sinus to compress either a cranial nerve or an extraocular muscle. in Sisler's case, the ethmoid sinus (located between the eyes) was reported to be infected, so that the mass would presumably have arisen within that particular sinus. Such a mass arising within the sinus can be uninfected (a mucocele) or infected (a mucopyocele). The report that the ethmoid sinus was infected suggests that it was a mucopyocele. However, successful decompression of such a mass should have produced improvement in Sisler's diplopia within the course of a few days or weeks. To the contrary, the records indicate that Sisler's diplopia was not resolved for almost a year, making it unlikely that the mass was a mucopyocele.

The second major possibility is that the infection could have spread from within the sinus into the adjacent orbit. Two possible mechanisms for such spread would be osteomyelitis (infection spreading to involve the bony wall of the orbit) or spread of infection through small openings in the wall without infection of the wall itself. Because the cranial nerves that control the extraocular muscles have a course that comes close to the walls of the ethmoid sinuses, infection extending beyond the orbital wall could produce inflammation of those nerves and impair their ability to control the extraocular muscles. Alternatively, osteo-myelitis of the sinus wall may have directly

George Sisler, whose composite batting average during 1920–22 was a staggering .400, sat out the 1923 season with vision problems and never completely recovered either his former good eyesight or prowess at the plate, although beginning in 1924 he hit over .300 every year except once (.290 in 1926) before retiring after the 1930 season.

caused inflammation of the extraocular muscles, which could become scarred as a result, their motion thereby becoming limited for a prolonged period. Again, the duration of Sisler's diplopia is helpful in trying to deduce its cause. A yearlong delay in recovery from a cranial neuropathy (if the infection had been adequately treated by surgery) would be unusually long. Therefore, excluding other causes as unlikely, we arrive at the conclusion that the most likely cause of Sisler's diplopia was not damage to one of the cranial nerves but rather prolonged inflammation of one of the extraocular muscles.

Whatever its cause, Sisler's diplopia appears to have produced a subtle but long-term effect on his ability to hit a baseball. By March 1924 he did note substantial improvement. "Neither eye has lost efficiency and gradually they are working together better," he said, adding that "the angle at which I do not see accurately is very small." Nonetheless, in his opinon he could not play "great baseball."[8] This suggests that some element of diplopia remained, perhaps brought on solely by the eye fatigue of focusing on the pitcher while at bat. This residual difficulty, and its effect on his hitting, was apparent to Bob Shawkey, a 16-game winner with the Yankees in 1924. "When he came back,

Sisler's diplopia, or double vision, followed a bout of sinusitis, which physicians at the time assumed was the cause of his vision problems. Yankees right-hander Bob Shawkey later reported that he soon learned that Sisler could focus on the pitcher only so long before having to glance down, at which point the pitcher would deliver.
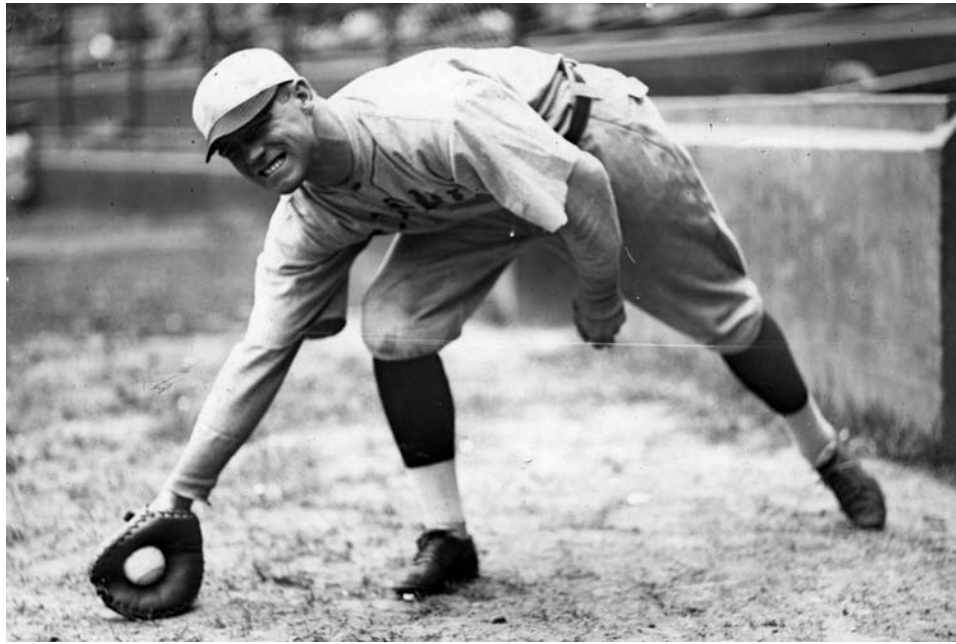
we soon learned something," Shawkey said. "When he was up at the plate, he could watch you for only so long, and then he'd have to look down to get his eyes focused again. So we'd keep him waiting up there until he'd have to look down, and then pitch. He was never the same hitter again after that."[9] This suggests that Sisler at bat experienced short, intermittent periods of diplopia, which were likely brought on by the exertion placed on his weakened extraocular muscles during just a few seconds of gazing at the pitcher while awaiting a thrown ball.

If Shawkey noticed this new quirk in George Sisler's batting style, presumably so did other pitchers. In 1923 Sisler was 30 years old. His composite batting average over the previous three seasons was .400. In 1924, when he returned to baseball, he hit .305. In 1926 his average fell below .300 (.290) for the first time since his rookie season in 1915. And his strikeouts increased from 60 in the period 1920–22 to 83 in 1924–26. More dramatically, his slugging percentages—.632, .560, and .594 in 1920–22—fell to .421, .479, and .398 in 1924–26.

In the spring of 1925, Sisler became the first major-leaguer to appear on the cover of *Time*. There the question was put succinctly: "Will he, fans wonder, regain his former prowess?"[10] He responded that year by batting .345, clubbing 12 home runs, and driving in 105 runs. Each figure was a post-illness high that few of his contemporaries would cry over. Yet years later, when asked about that performance, Sisler said he was aware of the numbers that he put up in 1925 but that they "never gave me much satisfaction. That isn't what I call real good hitting."[11]

Certainly Sisler's comments about his 1925 season were not flippant. The Browns' star was grateful for a recovery that permitted him to return to baseball. But the limited extent of that recovery would always leave him and other followers of his game wondering what might have been, and where an additional eight seasons of unimpeded vision would have landed him among the giants of the game. ∎

Notes

1. Babe Ruth, quoted in his syndicated column, *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*, 10 May 1925.
2. Unidentified oculist, quoted in Associated Press report, 10 April 1923. The quote appears in *The Scrapbook of Baseball History*, by J. A. Deutsch, R. M. Cohen, R. T. Johnson, and D. S. Neft (Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill, 1975), 115.
3. Unidentified "local specialist," quoted in *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*, 27 March 1923.
4. George H. Sisler, typewritten memoirs to his family, date unknown, 12.
5. George Sisler, quoted in *In the Shadows of the Diamond*, by Michael Santa Maria and James Costello (Dubuque, Iowa: Elysian Fields Press, 1992), 213.
6. *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*, 4 March 1924.
7. *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*, 12 April 1923.
8. *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*, 24 March 1924.
9. Donald Honig, *The Greatest First Basemen of All Time* (New York: Crown, 1988), 26.
10. *Time*, 30 March 1925, 28.
11. George Sisler, quoted in *Baseball's Greatest Hitters*, by Thomas Meany (New York: A. S. Barnes), 187.

Major-League Players
Who Wore Glasses

David A. Goss

You can't hit it if you can't see it. Success in baseball requires good visual skills, including being able to see clearly. Many people need glasses or contact lenses. The most common reason for using them before age 40 is myopia (nearsightedness), which affects 20 to 30 percent of young adults in the United States.[1,2] The percentage of major-league ballplayers who have played in glasses is far lower. In this article I will discuss data on the use of glasses by major-league players, possible reasons for fluctuations in their numbers over the years, and some firsts and miscellaneous facts on the use of glasses by ballplayers.

NUMBERS OF PLAYERS WHO HAVE WORN GLASSES

Sources that I have used to identify major-league players who wore glasses include various articles on the subject,[3-6] photos in publications and on the Internet, observation of telecasts, postings on SABR-L, e-mail communications from SABR members, and particularly a list compiled by baseball researcher Karl Priest. Priest has been compiling it for about twenty years. His criteria for including a player are an authoritative reference that the player wore or tried glasses, a photograph of a player in uniform wearing glasses, or observation of a player in uniform on television wearing glasses. I have used the same criteria in adding a few players to the list. As of December 2005, the total stands at 431. Given that 16,003 players played in the major leagues from 1871 through 2003,[7] those who wore glasses constituted less than 3 percent of the total.

To determine how the use of eyeglasses by ballplayers has changed over the years, I found the year in which each player who wore glasses made his major-league debut.[8,9] I also recorded for each one the position he played most often in his career.

Major-leaguers who wore glasses were rare before 1920. The only nineteenth-century player was William White,[10] who pitched until 1886. It would be another 29 years before another major-leaguer would wear glasses—Lee Meadows in 1915. From 1915 to 1919, he was joined by Carmen Hill and Norman Plitt.

As shown in the accompanying figure, the number of glasses-wearing players beginning their major-league careers increased each decade from the 1920s through the 1970s. Thirty debuted in the 1940s, 62 in the 1950s, 78 in the 1960s, and in the 1970s the number peaked to more than a hundred. There were 96 in the 1980s. It dropped to 17 in the 1990s, and so far there have been 11 who debuted between 2000 and 2005. The increase from the 1960s to the 1970s may be accounted for in part by league expansion. The drop in the 1990s is even more dramatic when we take into account that the decade saw further expansion. It is possible that there will be a few additions to the list for the 1990s and the first decade of the twenty-first century—some of the players who debuted in those years may start wearing glasses later in their careers.

I classified the players by when they began their major-league careers rather than the time (much more difficult to confirm) when they started wearing glasses. It is likely that most of these players wore glasses when they debuted. Among the known exceptions are Paul Waner, who started wearing glasses on the field at age 37 in 1940; Boom-Boom Beck, at age 33 in 1938; and Mel Ott, at age 31 in 1940.

Of the 430 who began their major-league careers between 1910 and 2005, 174 (40 percent) were pitchers, 35 (8 percent) catchers, 121 (28 percent) infielders, and 100 (23 percent) outfielders. No position appears to be significantly represented more than the others. I compared those percentages to the percentages for players whose last names begin with *A* and *B* and who debuted between 1910 and 2003.[8] Of those, 47 percent were pitchers, 8 percent catchers, 25 percent infielders, and 20 percent outfielders—percentages fairly close to those for the players who wore glasses and not significantly different by the chi-square statistic.

POSSIBLE EXPLANATIONS FOR FLUCTUATIONS IN THE NUMBERS

The spectacle lenses of the 1910s and 1920s were much more prone to breakage than are the lenses of today, and the frames used then were not as sturdy. The lenses in common use were glass. There were no minimum standards for thickness, and the thin glass lenses of that era were easily broken. Splinters of glass from broken lenses represented a significant risk for eye injury. Players of that time—Meadows, Hill, George Toporcer—all indicated that their glasses occasionally broke on the field. It is likely that youngsters
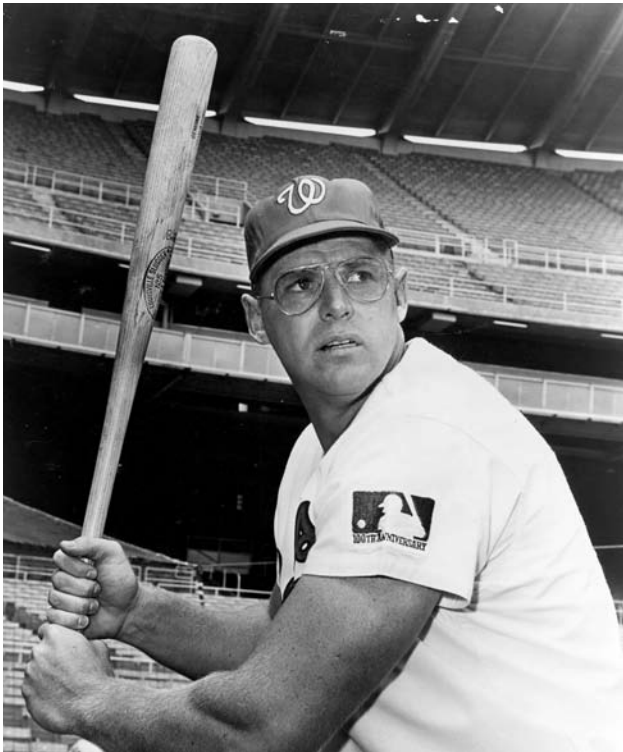
Frank Howard, slugger for the Washington Senators in the 1960s and early 1970s, when the percentage of major-leaguers wearing glasses was nearing its peak. He is shown here wearing the arm patch commemorating the centennial of professional baseball in 1969.

of that era who wore glasses were discouraged from playing baseball. Meadows was warned that baseball was "a brave but foolhardy career for one so afflicted."[12] And it has been reported that, because he wore glasses, Toporcer was not allowed to try out for his seventh-grade baseball team.[13]

In 1928, F. C. Lane wrote that

owners and managers and coaches, for at least two baseball generations, placed the young fellow who wore glasses in quite as hopeless a category as though he used crutches. For the mere wearing of glasses argued defective vision—the insurmountable barrier. . . . It is interesting, though quite useless, to speculate on how many capable ball players have been prevented from engaging in a baseball career during the past fifty years simply because they were obliged to wear glasses. Unquestionably the number is considerable.[4]

Lane went on to discuss the players of that era who wore glasses—Meadows, Hill, Josh Billings, and Dan MacFayden—and how they conquered the notion that wearing glasses was a "hopeless handicap to a ball player" and how they "paved the way" for others.

Improvements in the impact resistance of spectacle lenses coincided with a rise in the number of players who wore glasses. In the mid-twentieth century, heat tempering to strengthen glass lenses was introduced, and minimum thickness standards were established. In the 1950s, resin plastic lenses became more readily available. They did not break as easily as glass, and when they did break they were not as dangerous because they were less likely to shatter into small fragments. Late in the twentieth century, polycarbonate lenses were developed, their advantage being that they were more impact-resistant than either glass or plastic. Improved safety of spectacle lenses was probably a major reason for the rise in the number of players who wore glasses from the 1910s through the 1970s.

Another reason may have been a change in the attitudes of players. One often hears stories of early-twentieth-century players hiding physical infirmities or injuries for fear of losing their jobs. Oliver Abel in 1924 observed that "players are so much afraid their managers will discover that they ought to be using glasses that they refuse to wear them even off the field."[3] By 1960, however, Ralph Ray would comment that "although nowadays glasses are taken for granted by scouts, it wasn't until the last decade or so that players dared walk onto the diamond with specs, even if they needed them."[6]

For players looking for any edge to improve performance, the stigma of wearing glasses disappeared some time ago. One optometrist told me the story of a recent major-league player with a slight astigmatism, at a level that is usually left uncorrected because the improvement in visual acuity would be minimal. The player insisted on getting glasses because he thought that the tiny improvement in clarity of vision might help him in game situations.

Undoubtedly the reason for the decline in the use of glasses in the 1980s is the popularity of soft contact lenses. Rigid contact lenses became widely available in the 1950s. However, they did not work well for ballplayers, for several reasons—glare, sensation of lens movement, discomfort from dust getting under the lenses, and the small hard lenses were easily lost.[14] Players including Roy McMillan and Lee Walls tried rigid contact lenses and went back to glasses.[14] Soft contact lenses became available in the early 1970s. By the mid-1970s it was becoming clear that they were a good solution to the problems ballplayers experienced with hard lenses.[15]

More recently, refractive surgery, which reduces or eliminates dependence on glasses or contact lenses, has contributed to the further decline in the use of

glasses by players. Laby et al. found that seventeen position players had been identified in the public media as having had laser refractive surgery. They include Al Martin, Greg Vaughan, Mike Lansing, Bernard Gilkey, Jeff Bagwell, Wally Joyner, Jose Cruz, Bernie Williams, Todd Dunwoody, Trot Nixon, Frank Catalanotto, and Larry Walker. Of those twelve, Laby et al. compared the before-surgery and after-surgery batting averages, on-base percentages, slugging percentages, and on-base plus slugging (OPS). They concluded that the "preliminary data do not show a loss in performance after the refractive surgical procedure." However, they added, while unaided visual acuity after surgery may be improved enough for everyday activities without glasses, correction of small residual refractive conditions left after the procedure might still help a ballplayer's performance. They also noted that "the risk of a complication," (e.g., postoperative glare, halos, loss of best corrected visual acuity) "with the potential to end a player's career" is minimal but "real and likely not worth assuming without a scientifically documented on-field hitting benefit to undergoing the surgical procedure."[16]

SOME FIRSTS AND SOME MISCELLANEOUS FACTS

The first major-league player to wear glasses on the field was William H. White, a right-handed pitcher in the National League and American Association (1877–86). He led the American Association in wins in 1882 and 1883. After he retired from baseball, White became an optician and founded the Buffalo Optical Company.[17]

The first twentieth-century major-leaguer to play in glasses was Lee Meadows, who pitched for three National League teams, St. Louis (1915–19), Philadelphia (1919–23), and Pittsburgh (1923–29). He finished his career at 188–180 with a 3.37 ERA. In 1916 he pitched in 51 games to lead the league, and he tied for the league lead in wins (20) in 1926 and in complete games (25) in 1927. His nickname was "Specs." In close-up photographs his eyes appear small through his spectacle lenses, suggesting that he had myopia (nearsightedness). Lenses for the correction of myopia minify, so that the eyes look smaller through them. In contrast, lenses correcting hyperopia (farsightedness) magnify, making a person's eyes appear large through their glasses.

Carmen Hill, the next player to wear glasses, made his major-league debut late in the 1915 season. He pitched in the majors parts of ten seasons through 1930, going 49–33 with a 3.44 ERA. Of those 49 wins, 22 were in 1927, and 16 in 1928. As teammates on the pennant-winning Pittsburgh Pirates in 1927, Hill and Meadows

Dick Allen, who joined the White Sox in 1972, was the American League MVP that year (.308, 37 HR, 113 RBIs) after having made his mark with the Phillies in the 1960s. He began a short streak of glasses-wearing AL MVPs— Reggie Jackson followed in 1973, and Jeff Burroughs (who wore glasses in uniform sometimes) in 1974.
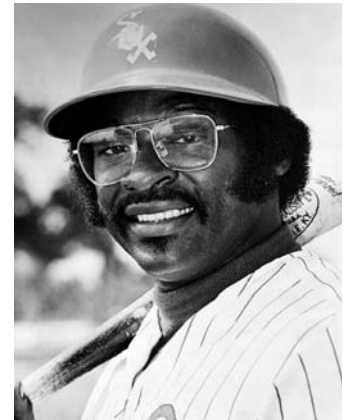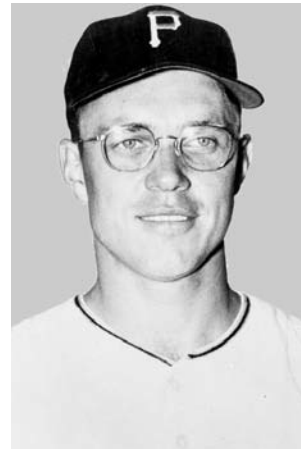
Bill Virdon, a premier defensive outfielder for the Pirates most of his career (1955–68) and, later, manager of the Pirates (1972–73), Yankees (1973–74), Astros (1975–82), and Expos (1983–84).

combined for 41 wins. Hill had a long minor-league career, during which he went 202–162.[18] Photographs of him suggest that he was nearsighted but probably not as nearsighted as Meadows. Hill started wearing glasses when he was 14 years old, and he later recalled that his glasses broke on the field on several occasions.[19,20] One of his nicknames was "Specs."

The first position player to wear glasses on the field was George "Specs" Toporcer (born Toporczer). In 546 games as a utility infielder for the St. Louis Cardinals (1921–28), he had a .279 batting average, .347 on-base percentage, and .373 slugging percentage. His best year was 1922, when he had a .324 batting average with 25 doubles in 116 games. In the majors the position he played most often was shortstop. After his years with the Cardinals, he played second base for Rochester on four consecutive International League championship teams. As a player and manager, Toporcer was named to the International League Hall of Fame. He is reported to have broken his glasses several times on bad-bounce ground balls. Photographs of Toporcer suggest that he had moderate to severe myopia. In his early fifties he

went blind after unsuccessful operations for retinal detachments,[21] which were likely related to his myopia, as the risk of retinal detachment increases with the severity of the myopia. Toporcer lived to age 90, sometimes appearing as an inspirational speaker.[22] He also wrote a baseball instructional book.

The first outfielder to wear glasses on the field was Charles J. "Chick" Hafey of the Cardinals (1924–31) and Cincinnati (1932–35, 1937). Various injuries and ailments limited his playing time. In only seven seasons did he play more than 100 games. He had 1,466 hits, a .317 batting average, .372 on-base percentage, and .526 slugging percentage in 1,283 career games. At .590, he led the National League in slugging percentage in 1927. In 1929, he began wearing glasses. Two years later he .349, becoming the first player who wore glasses to win a batting title. From reports in various sources, it is not clear exactly what Hafey's eye problem was. One of his teammates was quoted as saying that without his glasses Hafey couldn't read the large signs in railroad stations.[23] That suggests myopia, but Hafey apparently had a more complicated vision problem or an additional vision problem, as he had fluctuating vision and used three different pairs of glasses.[24]

The first major-league catcher to play in glasses was Clint Courtney. He spent most of his 11-year career (1951–61) with the St. Louis Browns and Baltimore Orioles and the Washington Senators, but he also played a few games for the New York Yankees, Chicago White Sox, and Kansas City Athletics. The only position he played in the majors was catcher (802 games). He had four seasons in which he caught more than 100 games, three with the Browns and Orioles and one with the Senators. In 946 games, he had a .268 batting average, .341 on-base percentage, and .366 slugging percentage.

The first glasses-wearing ballplayer to win a Most Valuable Player Award was Jim Konstanty in 1950. In 11 years in the majors, Konstanty pitched in 433 games, mostly in relief. He finished his career at 66–48 with a 3.46 ERA. In 1950 he pitched 152 innings in 74 games, all in relief, going 16–7 with an ERA of 2.66. Had saves been an official statistic that year, he would
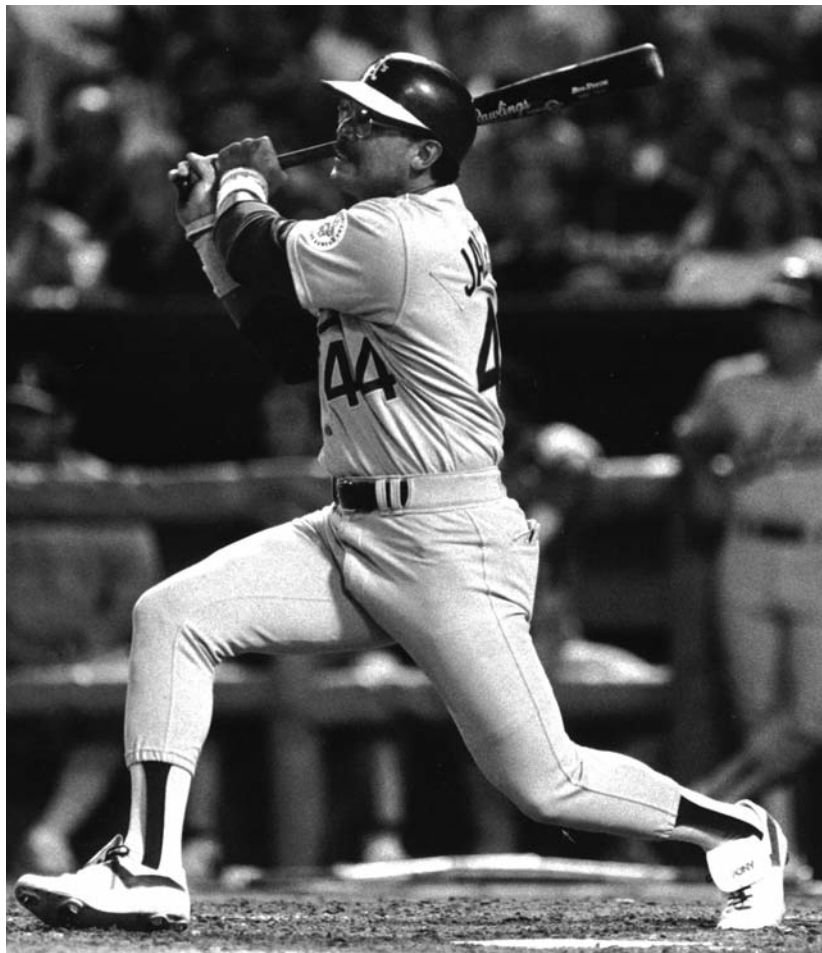
Reggie Jackson, another slugger who, with glasses, saw the ball well. He hit 563 home runs in his 21-year career (1967–87) and, as "Mr. October," hit .357 and 10 home runs over five different World Series, all of which his team won. He was World Series MVP twice (1973, 1977) and was elected to the Hall of Fame in 1993.

have led the league with 22. He was an important part in the Phillies' successful pennant drive in 1950.

Myths about ballplayers who wear glasses are common. Stories about Ryne Duren's poor vision and "Coke-bottle" glasses abound. An optometrist of my acquaintance said that, when he examined Duren after he had retired from baseball, he found Duren to have normal visual acuity with his glasses and only slight myopia.

Today players who wear glasses on the field are few. Some of them use sports frames. Recent and current players who wear glasses include Gustavo Chacin, Brendan Donnelly, Travis Driskill, Eric Gagne, Brandon League, Ramon Nivar, Jason Phillips, Duaner Sanchez, Ismael Valdez, and Jose Vizcaino. Ballplayers in glasses are not as common today as they were in the 1960s and '70s, but they are more accepted now than they were a hundred years ago. When was the last time you heard a player called "Specs"? ∎

FIGURE 1. Number of major-league players who wore glasses, categorized by their first year in the majors. (The asterisk over the bar for the decade the 2000s is a reminder that this covers only the six years from 2000 through 2005. Projected to ten years, the number, which is now 11, would be 18, close to the 17 for the number of players who wore glasses in the 1990s.)
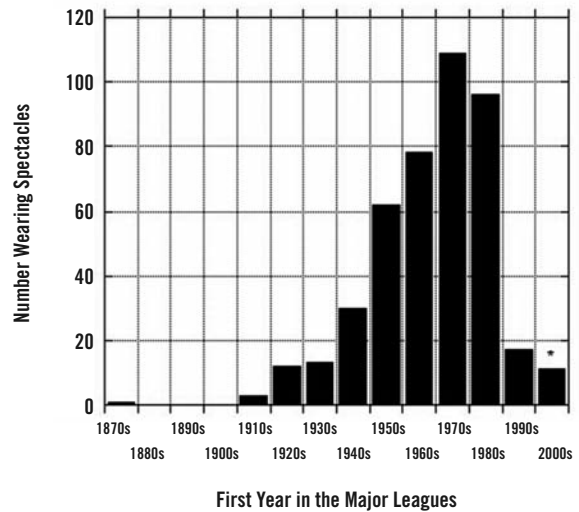
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History versus Harry Frazee

Re-revising the Story

Daniel R. Levitt, Mark L. Armour, Matthew Levitt

When the Boston Red Sox won the World Series in 1918, it was their fifth triumph in the fifteen years of the modern classic. The club had the best player in baseball, outfielder-pitcher Babe Ruth, another top hitter in Harry Hooper, star catcher Wally Schang, and four other pitching stars—Carl Mays, Dutch Leonard, Joe Bush, and Sam Jones—each younger than 27. With the ending of the Great War, Ernie Shore, Duffy Lewis, and other stars were returning from military service. Local fans were optimistic—not only because the ballclub was loaded with talent but because Bostonians had become accustomed to great teams since the early days of professional baseball.

Within a few years all of the above players were gone, mostly traded or sold to the New York Yankees, and the Red Sox had become a laughable franchise, finishing dead last in nine of eleven years from 1922 through 1932. The Yankees, Boston's previously irrelevant neighbor to the south, took advantage of the Red Sox largesse to build a dynasty, winning their first-ever pennant in 1921 and going on to win a total of 29 in a 44-year period.

The man who owned the Red Sox and presided over this change of fortunes was Harry Frazee. Frazee, a New York–based theater owner, producer, and director, bought the two-time defending champions after the 1916 season and then oversaw another championship in the war-ravaged 1918 season. After divesting his club of all its best players, the team he sold to Bob Quinn in 1923 was a wreck, and he took his place as one of the more vilified people in Boston's 85-year championship drought. As recounted in Fred Lieb's 1947 history, *The Boston Red Sox,* Frazee dismantled his team because he needed capital to help finance his plays—when he didn't have any players left to sell, he bailed out and sold the entire team.[1] This depiction of Frazee and the team's dismantling was prevalent throughout most of the twentieth century.

In 2000, Glenn Stout and Richard Johnson published their book *Red Sox Century,* which famously revised the Frazee story.[2] According to their version and several subsequent articles written by Stout,[3] Frazee was not a villain but a victim. He was in no way short of money—in fact, he was a wealthy man

Harry Frazee (1881–1929), owner of the Red Sox (1916–23) during a period that saw them go from first to worst, having won the World Series in 1916 and 1918 and then finishing last in 1922 and 1923. When gate receipts at Fenway began to plummet and his theater ventures to flounder, Frazee proceeded to dismantle his team as he strove to meet his financial obligations.

throughout his years in baseball, and he died rich.

Why was Frazee a victim? According to Stout and Johnson, Frazee was being actively forced out of his position by American League president Ban Johnson, and many of Johnson's allies would not trade with Frazee. One team that would was the Yankees, and, all things considered, Frazee made good deals that turned out poorly because of some unforeseen bad luck.

Why did Johnson want Frazee out in Boston? Mainly, according to Stout, because Johnson hated Jews and he believed Frazee was Jewish. Frazee wasn't, but he made his money in an industry where Jews played a prominent role, and the false claim that Frazee was Jewish was suggested in at least one published story. Fred Lieb, according to Stout, was also anti-Semitic and his bigotry led to the revival of the anti-Frazee angle in 1947.

This article will show that the Stout/Johnson thesis is almost completely false. Fred Lieb was not a historian in the way we think of baseball historians today. He was a baseball reporter and storyteller who lived through many of these events, and his books are filled with (mostly small) errors due to his reliance on memory, either his or someone else's. But Lieb got the Frazee story right, and recent attempts to rewrite history are misguided and a disservice to the historical record. The Harry Frazee Papers, recently available at
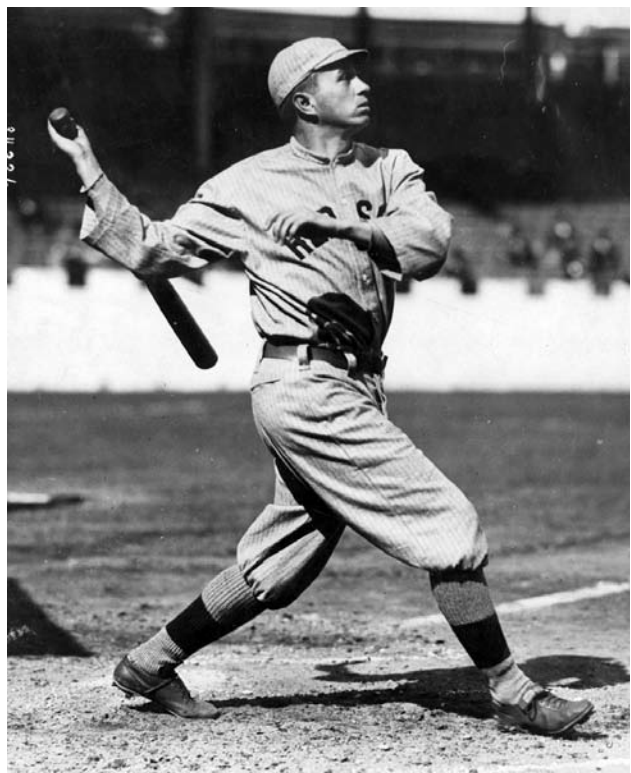
Harry Hooper, star outfielder for the Red Sox, was among a cluster of stars Frazee inherited when he and Hugh Ward bought the Red Sox and Fenway Park from Joseph Lannin in 1916 for $1 million. After the 1920 season, Hooper was traded to the White Sox.

the University of Texas,[4] and New York Yankees business and financial records on file at the National Baseball Hall of Fame and Museum make clear both Frazee's financial distress and the large dollar amounts involved in his player transactions with the Yankees. Harry Frazee sold Babe Ruth and several other players (before and after the Ruth sale) to the Yankees for upward of $450,000 because he needed the money.

BRIEF SUCCESS IN BOSTON

Harry Frazee and his theater pal Hugh Ward purchased the Red Sox along with Fenway Park in November 1916 from Joseph Lannin for a total capital obligation of $1 million. The duo paid $662,000 for the club itself: $400,000 in cash to Lannin (of which Lannin used $100,000 to repay outstanding loans to parties from whom he had purchased the club) and a three-year note for $262,000, due November 1919. The team had also issued $150,000 of preferred stock held by Charles Taylor, the owner prior to Lannin; Frazee's new ownership group was now responsible for both the dividend and the eventual principal repayment of this nonvoting equity interest. Frazee's personal ownership interest in the franchise was 70 percent.[5]

Additionally, Frazee assumed a mortgage of $188,000 as part of the Fenway Park acquisition. (This was technically an indenture of trust, which is identical to a mortgage in terms of the loan security.) Frazee technically owned the stadium through an entity called Fenway Realty Trust, and the team leased the facility from this company—a fairly typical arrangement between two sister companies. The stock of the Fenway Realty Trust (i.e., Frazee's ownership interest in Fenway Park) was pledged as security for the $262,000 note.[6] Taylor and a couple of associates held the mortgage on Fenway Park; on the sale from Lannin to Frazee, Lannin also apparently joined the mortgagees.[7]

The precise nature of Frazee's capital sources are, of course, impossible to reconstruct at this late date, but it is fairly clear that he also borrowed his share of the $400,000 in cash necessary to purchase the team. In an unsigned loan-consolidation document dated May 1921, Frazee considered refinancing $343,250 of debts (exclusive of a new mortgage loan on Fenway Park, to be discussed later), of which $250,000 was owed to the Federal Trust Company and secured by 700 shares in the Red Sox franchise (the remainder was owed to various individuals and banks on behalf of his theater interests)—undoubtedly the major source of Frazee's portion of the funds used to purchase the club. As further evidence of his large borrowings, Frazee and the Red Sox had large interest obligations: In 1920, the only year for which we have a complete team financial statement, the club paid $34,061 in interest (again, exclusive of the interest on the mortgage, which was a separate line item on the team financial statement—apparently the interest on the $250,000 was run through the club's books), and, according to his tax return, he personally paid another

Babe Ruth, star left-handed pitcher for the Red Sox, played 59 games in the outfield too in 1918 and 111 games in 1919, when he pitched in only 17 games. Having now established himself as one of the league's great hitters, he was sold by Frazee to the Yankees in December 1919 for a record $100,000.
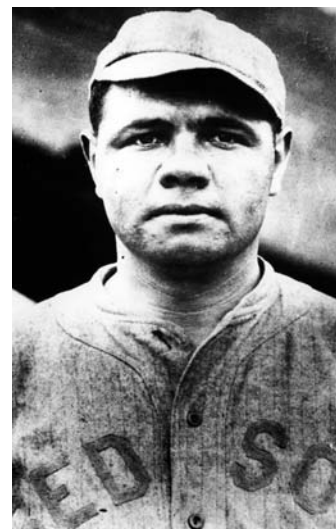
COURTESY OF THE BOSTON RED SOX
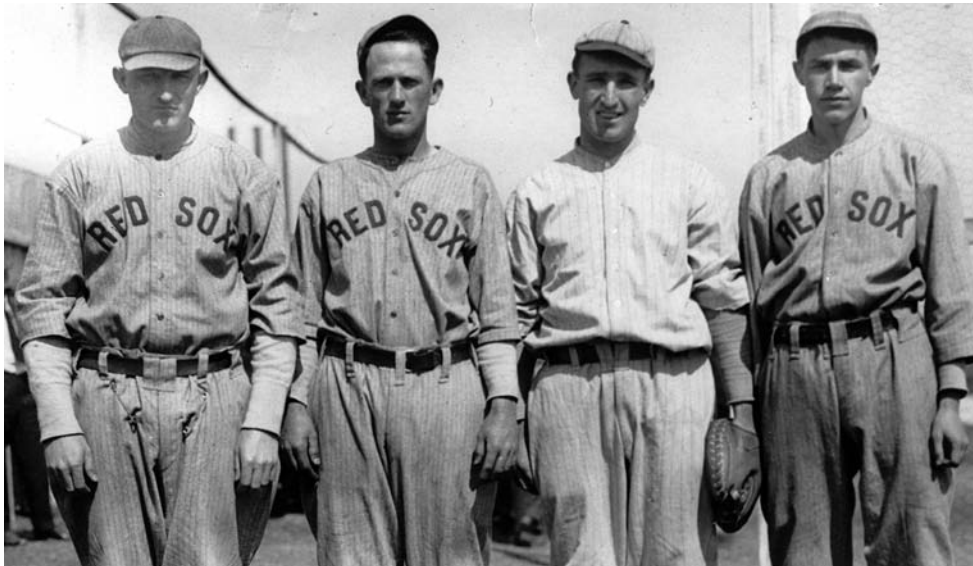
Left to right: Carl Mays, Harry Hooper, Ray Haley (catcher), and Ralph Comstock (pitcher) in 1915. Mays, after walking out on his contract in July 1919, was sold by Frazee to the Yankees for $40,000, in defiance of league president Ban Johnson's prohibition of the move and cementing the alliance of Boston, New York, and Chicago ownership against Johnson.

$12,475 in interest that year. Looked at another way, if we assume an average interest rate of 6 percent,[8] Frazee and the Red Sox needed to support payments of more than $50,000 based on roughly $850,000 of principal ($250,000 loan secured by the team + $262,000 note to Lannin + $150,000 preferred stock + $188,000 mortgage, and this does not include any potential borrowing by Ward).

The purchase by Frazee from Lannin was the first sale of an American League franchise not vetted and approved by American League president Ban Johnson. For many years Johnson had ruled the American League with dictatorial authority, earned through successes at the birth of the league and long-term bonds forged with the league's early owners. Newcomer Frazee felt little allegiance to Johnson and showed none of the deference Johnson had come to expect, and the two strong personalities disliked each other from the start. At the time, bookies and organized gamblers operated relatively openly in many ballparks, and it was reputedly most blatant in Boston.[9] Johnson seized on this gambling problem in Fenway Park in 1917 as a pretext to condemn Frazee.

Johnson and Frazee appeared to reach some sort of détente during the 1917–18 offseason. Frazee hired Johnson's friend Ed Barrow as Boston's manager, and Johnson likely facilitated the sale of three Philadelphia Athletics stars to Frazee, who was still optimistic about his baseball business, for $60,000. But any reconciliation quickly unraveled in the struggles of the confused, war-shortened 1918 season. Frazee was outspoken in his criticism of Johnson's handling of the war complications and controversies. When the season ended, Johnson began campaigning to oust Frazee from own-

ership of the Red Sox, while Frazee lobbied to curb Johnson's authority, going so far as to approach former U.S. president William Howard Taft about becoming a "one-man National Baseball Commission" that would oversee all of baseball.

The Carl Mays incident in 1919 finally cemented the divide of the American League into two warring factions. Mays, one of the league's top pitchers, jumped the Red Sox in July, and, as the other league owners began offering packages of players and money for Mays, Frazee looked to cash in. Johnson argued that an insubordinate player should not be able to force a trade and demanded the Red Sox instead suspend Mays. Frazee and the Yankee owners, Jacob Ruppert and Tillinghast L'Hommedieu Huston, ignored

COURTESY OF THE BOSTON RED SOX

Mays, shown here later in his career with the Reds. A right-hander with a submarine delivery, he won 61 games for the Red Sox in 1916–18. After going 5–11 (but with a low ERA, 2.47) for the Sox in 1919, he jumped the team in midseason and finished by going 9–3 with the Yankees.

Johnson's edict: The Yankees bought Mays for $40,000 and two players. Johnson ordered Mays suspended and decreed he could not play for New York. The Yankees owners defied Johnson and obtained a court injunction permitting Mays to play for them. With this act of defiance, the Yankees owners became, at least as much as Frazee, the focus of Johnson's enmity. Chicago White Sox owner Charles Comiskey, also feuding with Johnson, joined Frazee and the Yankees owners in a triumvirate committed to the dismissal, or at least neutering, of Johnson.

FINANCIAL STRUGGLES BEGIN

At the time Frazee purchased the Red Sox, they were one of the most valuable franchises in baseball. When Frazee offered to sell a piece of the team to Ed Barrow after the 1917 season and make him a club executive, Barrow attempted to raise the funds by borrowing from his wealthier baseball friends. In his solicitation letter Barrow called the franchise one of baseball's most profitable, behind only the New York Giants and Chicago White Sox.[10]

Player-manager Jack Barry signs his 1917 contract as Frazee looks on. Barry missed the 1918 season to serve in the navy in World War I. After returning to the Red Sox in 1919, he was traded by Frazee to the Athletics but decided at that point to retire.

Unfortunately for Frazee, profits from the club declined sharply after 1916 as attendance collapsed. The total gate decreased from 496,397 in 1916 to 387,856 in 1917 and then, in the war-shortened 1918 season, to 249,513. In 1919, Red Sox home attendance rebounded to 417,291, but the increase was smaller than what most other American League teams enjoyed. During these years the team's revenue could not have been sufficient to service Frazee's required interest payments. In 1920, for example, one of the most profitable years in baseball up to that time and the earliest one for which we could discover team financial statements, the Boston franchise turned a profit of only $5,970 after paying interest and the 6 percent dividend on the preferred stock.[11]

Although moderately successful with his theater ventures, Frazee was not earning anything close to enough capital to cover the costs of his baseball team, much less to accumulate substantial wealth. Frazee had two principal sources of theater-related income: the Cort Theatre in Chicago and the production of his own plays. Frazee was president of the Cort Theatre Company and a 54 percent owner. As president he earned a salary of $12,000 per year, and as an owner he was entitled to his share of the profits.[12] Unfortu-

nately the profits were not particularly strong. The fiscal year ending July 31, 1916, saw a profit of $68,192, by far the theater's best year. These substantial earnings may have helped convince Frazee that he could afford to buy the Red Sox that November. But the Great War and its aftermath significantly cut into the operation's earnings. For the fiscal years ending July 31, 1918, and July 31, 1919, the theater turned profits of only $4,544 and $5,225 respectively.[13]

The specific economics of Frazee's plays are almost impossible to reconstruct at this point, nearly a century later, but it is clear from his tax returns and snippets of financial information related to his plays that he was not generating significant wealth prior to his hit *No, No, Nanette* in the mid-1920s (at least relative to the ownership of a baseball team and his other obligations). In an article on the economics of producing theatrical plays, Tino Balio and Robert G. McLaughlin highlight the difficulty of making money in this business: "One of the ironic and yet accepted truths of Broadway economics: productions, both large and small, can have substantially long runs and still show a loss when they close." The authors examined a number of plays over the period 1938 to 1960 to underscore how difficult it was to turn a profit.[14]

Although his career fell outside this time frame, Frazee clearly suffered from similar economics. On his 1920 income-tax return, for example, he shows a net loss of $42,534 for his theatrical companies. He claimed losses of $33,000 for *My Lady Friends* (B and C companies), $13,305 for *Ladies' Day,* $5,989 for *Toy Girl,* and $2,335 for *Song Bird.* He turned a profit on only one company, $12,096 on *My Lady Friends* (A company). Table 1 spotlights the profits (or lack thereof) for touring *A Good Bad Woman* through the Midwest in 1919.[15] This gloomy picture mirrored a downward trend in road productions during this period. In New York the theater rebounded for two seasons after the war but then hit another downturn when the country fell into a brief recession.[16]

TABLE 1. Profit from Midwest Summer Tour,
   A Good Bad Woman, 1919

Week Ending	Location	Profit ($)
10 May	Erie, PA	(36.0)
17 May	South Bend, IN	1,105.0
24 May	Peoria, IL	1,747.0
31 May	Madison, WI	416.0
7 Jun	Wausau, WI	14.0
14 Jun	Duluth, MN	133.0
21 Jun	Minneapolis, MN	(2,171.0)
28 Jun	Several small towns: Minnesota, Wisconsin	(2,426.0)
5 Jul	Several small towns: Minnesota, South Dakota, North Dakota	(1,579.0)
12 Jul	Several small towns: Montana, Wyoming	(447.0)
19 Jul	Salt Lake City, UT	(963.0)
	Ending Cash on Hand	**583.0**

Furthermore, Frazee often needed to sell off a significant ownership percentage to finance his productions, leaving him only a small percentage of the profits. According to the Internet Broadway Database (www.ibdb.com), Frazee's longest-running show in the late 1910s was *Nothing But the Truth,* which ran from September 1916 through July 1917. (Notably, after this run Frazee had no play in production—presumably because of the war—until October 1918, a long time to be without theater revenue when his baseball team was struggling at the gate.) Frazee, however, needed to sell off a majority interest in *Nothing But the Truth,* and it is unlikely he received a substantial premium.

In a letter dated June 13, 1917, Lawrence Weber, a sometime backer of Frazee, chastised him for his distribution of the profits from *Nothing But the Truth*: "You certainly seem to be laboring under a misapprehension as to your ownership of a considerably bigger interest than you think you have."[17] Weber complained that, when they had repurchased Sam Friedman's 10 percent interest for $3,500 (using Weber's money), the "agreement was that this money was to be repaid to me out of the net balance of interest or 8% before any profits were declared," later adding that "it is just five years since you made your first touch from me and it is about time that matters are cleaned up." Hardly the tone or dollar amounts to be used with someone flush with cash.

Specifically, Weber pointed out that Frazee owned only 38 percent of the play and that, when he further sold out to Gilbert M. Anderson, Frazee was reduced to only a 3 percent interest. The letter noted that through June 9, 1917, the show made $42,778, a decent return but not the kind of profit needed to generate the resources necessary to meet Frazee's looming obligations.

While the analysis of the incomplete baseball and theater documents available in the Frazee Papers may allow a little room for interpretation, his tax returns clearly testify to his unexceptional income. We have summarized Frazee's individual income-tax returns in table 2. His financial affairs were not particularly well organized, and he may have been exaggerating the deductible expenses associated with his plays. But even acknowledging that Frazee's tax returns may have understated his actual cash available does not change the basic fact that he was earning well short of the amounts necessary to continue to service his considerable debts for the team and park. The loose papers and revenue and expense schedules attached to his returns further corroborate his modest income (by baseball-franchise standards). As a confirmation of the validity of the tax returns, several years after Frazee died a final appraisal of his estate was released. He left $1,152,390 in gross assets and $714,935 in debts and other deductions, resulting in a net estate of $437,455 ($94,952 going to his widow, $189,125 to his son, and $153,378 being owed to his first wife).[18] These amounts seem reasonable when compared with the last few years of available tax returns, which reflect the large profits he made from *No, No, Nanette.*

Our examination of Frazee's tax returns revealed that in the late 1910s his earnings were falling well short of his commitments. After showing a negative taxable income of $26,699 in 1915, he earned $24,928 in 1916, his best year up to that point. This solid income and an expectation of more good years was almost certainly a key factor in his acquisition of the Red Sox that November. The next few years, however, were not kind to Frazee financially. In 1917 his income

TABLE 2. Harry Frazee's Income-Tax Returns, 1913–1926

INCOME	1913	1914	1915	1916	1917	1918	1919
Salary: Boston Red Sox					9,000.00	15,000.00	10,000.00
Salary: Cort Theatre Company					12,000.00	12,000.00	12,000.00
Salary: Other (incl expenses allowed against salary)						(9,450.00)	
Salary: Subtotal	5,150.00	12,200.00	7,800.00	3,700.00	21,000.00	17,550.00	22,000.00
Profit from plays and theater company	19,715.00		23,114.00	65,265.00	17,775.00		600.00
Income from rent	315.00				1,341.00	572.50	231.00
Other income		540.00	540.00				
Installment income from sale of Red Sox							
Income subtotal	25,180.00	12,740.00	31,454.00	68,965.00	40,116.00	18,122.50	22,831.00
DEDUCTIONS							
Interest	3,250.00	6,600.00	8,200.00	12,600.00	7,312.50	20,811.00	14,860.00
Taxes on real property	82.00	127.00	125.00				
Net costs attributable to plays	48,969.00	11,500.00	50,053.00	19,137.50	17,178.00	8,750.00	
Other deductions (bad debts, etc.)			2,775.00	12,300.00		1,925.00	7,250.00
Deductions subtotal	52,301.00	18,227.00	61,153.00	44,037.50	24,490.50	31,486.00	22,110.00
Taxable income before exemptions	(27,121.00)	(5,487.00)	(29,699.00)	24,927.50	15,625.50	(13,363.50)	721.00
Other income (tax paid elsewhere)		65,426.76					

INCOME	1920	1921	1922	1923	1924	1925	1926
Salary: Boston Red Sox	15,000.00	15,000.00	25,000.00	11,666.67			
Salary: Cort Theatre Company	12,000.00	35,877.77	12,000.00	12,000.00	12,000.00	12,000.00	12,000.00
Salary: Other (incl expenses allowed against salary)	(7,800.00)	1,900.00			9,000.00		
Salary: Subtotal	19,200.00	52,777.77	37,000.00	23,666.67	21,000.00	12,000.00	12,000.00
Profit from plays and theater company	2,500.00	3,805.89	20,669.54	3,667.43	21,389.75	302,363.43	29,767.14
Income from rent							
Other income			2,302.50		3,827.81		
Installment income from sale of Red Sox				15,937.50	15,937.50	15,937.50	15,937.50
Income subtotal	21,700.00	56,583.66	59,972.04	43,271.60	62,155.06	330,300.93	57,704.64
DEDUCTIONS							
Interest	12,475.00	18,965.00	9,502.00	10,668.12	13,953.28	13,141.23	11,321.14
Taxes on real property	125.00		1,126.00	1,352.28	3,358.00	1,985.13	1,831.85
Net costs attributable to plays	42,533.54	37,256.45	62,581.98	20,435.29			
Other deductions (bad debts, etc.)	1,150.00			13,140.00	13,890.00	76,512.50	14,133.37
Deductions subtotal	56,283.54	56,221.45	73,209.98	45,595.69	31,201.28	91,638.86	27,286.36
Taxable income before exemptions	(34,583.54)	362.21	(13,237.94)	(2,324.09)	30,953.78	238,662.07	30,418.28

dropped to $15,626; in 1918 it actually dipped into the red, with a negative net income of $13,364; in 1919 his income rebounded all the way to $721. Again, Frazee may have been overstating his expenses; he certainly lived beyond the means indicated by his taxable income. But his income would have had to have been a full order of magnitude larger to have met his looming financial obligations. Note, too, that when Frazee had his biggest hit several years later with *No No Nanette*, his tax returns did in fact reflect a much higher income.

Frazee's continued personal borrowing from the Red Sox, often in relatively small amounts, further testifies to his relatively straitened economic circumstances. He often had the club pay some of his non-baseball-related expenses. Additionally, in 1919 he overdrew his salary by $5,850; in 1920 he overdrew his salary by $21,659 and pocketed another $5,000 on a note. At the end of 1920, according to the team's financial statements, Frazee owed the club $38,293.

Soon Frazee not only found himself squeezed by the interest on all his debt; in November 1919 the $262,000 principal on Lannin's note came due as well. Magnifying the problem, Ban Johnson would gladly use Frazee's financial distress to try to lever him out of baseball. Furthermore, Frazee was looking to purchase the Harris Theatre on West 42nd Street in New York, which would cost $410,000 later in 1920. Although Frazee and his partner John Heyer eventually arranged for a mortgage of $310,000 on the theater, the partners still needed to contribute $100,000 in equity. Frazee clearly needed fresh funds—and quickly—to support his two businesses.[19]

THE SALE OF RUTH

With his financial squeeze mounting, on January 5, 1920, Frazee announced the notorious sale of Babe Ruth to the New York Yankees. For Ruth, Frazee received the record sum of $100,000: $25,000 up front and three promissory notes of $25,000 each at a 6 percent interest rate, due in November 1920, 1921, and 1922. In addition, Ruppert gave Frazee a three-month commitment that he would lend him $300,000 to be secured by a first mortgage on Fenway Park.[20] With Ruth dispatched, the Red Sox would not finish in the first division again until 1934.

All parties to the transaction consistently maintained that Frazee needed money. Ed Barrow, the Red Sox manager at the time, later recalled that Frazee set up a meeting in the café of the Hotel Knickerbocker in New York to tell Barrow about the deal. "Lannin is after me to make good on my notes," Frazee told Barrow.

Yankees owner Jacob Ruppert and general manager Ed Barrow. Barrow, who succeeded Jack Barry as Red Sox manager in 1918 and led them to a world championship, joined the Yankees' front office shortly before they began their first pennant-winning season in 1921.

And my shows aren't going so good. Ruppert and Huston will give me $100,000 for Ruth and they've also agreed to loan me $350,000 [*sic*]. I can't afford to turn that down. But don't worry. I'll get you some ballplayers, too.

Barrow further added that Frazee "showed me how much he owed, how much he had lost at Fenway Park, and how urgent it was that he get the $500,000 which would be made available by the sale of Ruth."[21]

Yankee owners Ruppert and Huston each stated that Frazee sold Ruth because he needed the funds. Both, particularly Huston, were close friends of Frazee and were well acquainted with his financial situation. They recognized that Frazee was being squeezed and needed to pay off Lannin's note. Ruppert also later remarked on how small Frazee's initial cash investment was relative to the price of the franchise: "Joe Lannin, from whom Frazee had bought the Boston club on a shoestring, was hollering for his money."[22] In a separate account, Huston told the same story: "Frazee found it necessary to do some financing in his baseball ownership," he recalled. "There was a mortgage of about $300,000 on the Boston club and grounds and the holders of this paper called it—insisted on having the money."[23] This certainly referred to the $262,000 note due Lannin, the security for which was actually Frazee's equity interest in Fenway Park.

Fred Lieb, a longtime baseball writer and author of several baseball books in the 1940s and 1950s, is another primary source for these details. "Harry Frazee," he wrote,

> once told the author the rape wasn't premeditated. He didn't plan it that way; it just happened. He needed money, and the Yankee colonels, Ruppert and Huston, hungry for a winner, had plenty of it.

(Lieb credited sportswriter Burt Whitman with coining the phrase "the rape of the Red Sox" to describe the sale of Ruth and other players, mostly to the Yankees.) Lieb continued: "'The Ruth deal was the only way I could retain the Red Sox,' Frazee once told the author in a moment of confidence."[24]

FINANCIAL STRUGGLES WORSEN

Unfortunately, the sale of Ruth did not immediately clear up Frazee's financial obligations. For one thing, Frazee's finances were relatively disorganized, and his attorneys were having difficulty cleaning up the existing mortgage so that the new one from Ruppert could be secured. In the meantime, Frazee immediately began trying to borrow against his three $25,000 notes from the Ruth sale. On December 30, 1919, Colonel Huston wrote to his partner Jacob Ruppert: "I told Mr. Frazee that I would try to get him a short-time loan at my bank, with one of the notes we gave the Boston Club as collateral." In February 1920, Huston again sent a message to Ruppert on financing the notes:

> Mr. Harry Frazee is asking us to aid in getting three $25,000 notes discounted. He says events with Mr. Lannin have made it impossible to follow his original intention of having the notes discounted in Boston.

Frazee wanted cash immediately by either selling or borrowing against the three $25,000 notes.[25]

In a friendly but supplicating letter to Frazee on January 11, 1920, Joseph Lannin, expressing dismay at the delay in Frazee's repayment of his $262,000 note after Lannin had extended the date, stipulated, "as agreed by you, that payment would be made before December 4." Lannin added that he needed the money for several of his own obligations:

> I have purchased some property and have been granted two extensions, but the owners refuse to give me a further extension of time, so I must

get this money or meet with considerable financial loss, as I would forfeit a substantial payment that I have already made. I have also agreed to take an interest in the Mercedes Automobile Agency, depending on receiving this money from you.[26]

In February 1920, as Frazee's attorneys struggled through the outstanding mortgage issues with Taylor's group, Lannin sued to have his security (Frazee's ownership interest in Fenway Park) auctioned off, with the proceeds going to pay off his note. To delay and mitigate repayment of his debt to Lannin, Frazee claimed that, when he had acquired the club, he had unexpectedly taken on an additional obligation of $60,000 to $70,000 that was rightfully owed by Lannin as part of a legal settlement baseball owners made with the Federal League.[27]

On March 8, Frazee's and Lannin's attorneys signed a stipulation resolving the dispute wholly in favor of Lannin. The settlement called for Frazee to pay $25,000 by March 8, another $25,000 by March 22, and the $215,000 balance by May 3, and Lannin would earn interest on all funds not paid by April 5. (Why this settlement included an extra $3,000 to Lannin is not clear, but several items were in play, and the extra payment could have been for interest, legal fees, or some other associated cost.) To access Ruppert's loan, however, the cash-strapped Frazee still had to clear up the existing mortgage on Fenway Park (including refinancing Taylor's preferred stock). Otherwise, the ballpark could not be used as collateral for the $300,000 loan from Ruppert. In April 1920, as his attorneys finalized arrangements for the release of the existing mortgage, Frazee sent a letter to Ruppert asking for the loan, to which Ruppert agreed:

> You remember that I phoned you about ten days before the expiration of your agreement to make a loan of $300,000 on Fenway Park and asked you to extend the time, which you advised me you would tell Mr. Grant to do. However, I have received no word from Mr. Grant. I telephoned Col. Huston today, as I could not reach you on the phone, asking the Colonel to see you and advise that I have cleaned up all matters upon the Preferred Stock which your Attorney wanted before making the loan and I am now ready to accept it on May 15.
>
> You can understand how important this is to me as my plans have all been based on my ability to

secure this loan. Therefore, will you please send me signed agreement, copy of which Mr. Grant has, stating that you will advance the $300,000 . . . and if possible make the date May 20th. . . . *I need this agreement signed by you here very badly to complete the balance of my negotiations.* [Our emphasis][28]

The mortgage would have netted Frazee about $175,000 in new funds ($300,000 less the balance on the existing mortgage of roughly $125,000).[29] And so, in total, the Ruth transaction freed up about $275,000 for Frazee to meet his financial obligations. Eventually Frazee purchased his theater, renaming it the Frazee Theatre, and settled with Lannin, sending him the final payment of $216,003 (including some additional interest) on May 3.[30]

As evidence for the claim that Frazee had no financial worries, Stout has suggested a couple of other reasons for the Ruth sale. As it is now obvious that Frazee desperately needed money to pay off Lannin and purchase his theater, these alternative explanations are basically irrelevant. They also do not hold up to careful scrutiny. Stout makes much of the fact that at the time Boston writers and fans did not universally pan the sale of baseball's biggest star to what would become their biggest rival. Of course one of the main reasons for the wait-and-see attitude was Frazee's announcement in the wake of the sale: "With this money the Boston club can now go into the market and buy other players and have a stronger and better team in all respects than we would have had if Ruth had remained with us."[31] Many writers believed Frazee's story, though eventually they would learn differently.

Moreover, by the end of the 1919 season, Ruth's status as the game's best player and biggest celebrity at the tender age of 24 belied Frazee's later claim that Ruth was actually a detriment to the club. In 1919 he set the single-season home-run record with 29, when no one else hit more than 10. He also hit .322, led the league in RBIs, and went 9–5 in 133⅓ innings pitched for good measure. He may have been hard to manage, but the Red Sox had already won three world championships with Ruth, and on the Yankees he would help win another seven pennants and four World Series, while the New York club typically led the league in attendance. Ruth was a player who created a winner both on the field and at the box office. Frazee, a clever theatrical promoter, naturally recognized Ruth's value—so much so that he leveraged him into $100,000 and a $300,000 loan. Ruth's purchase price was by far the

highest in baseball history at the time, higher than the prices paid for Tris Speaker and Eddie Collins just a few years earlier, surely a sign of just how valuable he was perceived to be.

The remortgage of Fenway Park only prolonged Frazee's need for a steady influx of cash, and over the next few years he became addicted to financial injections from the Yankees owners. As confirmed in the Yankees' financial records and shown in table 3, subsequent to the Ruth sale Frazee sold the rest of his top players to the Yankees for more than $300,000. When the Yankees won their first World Series in 1923, four of the eight starting position players and four-fifths of their starting rotation had come from the Red Sox. The Red Sox finished last in the American League, and their skeletal remains would be the doormat of the league for many years.

TABLE 3. Yankee Player Purchases from Red Sox, 1918–1923

Date	Cash ($)	With Players	For Players
18 Dec 1918	25,000	Frank Gilhooley Slim Love Ray Caldwell Roxy Walters	Duffy Lewis Ernie Shore Dutch Leonard (1)
29 Jul 1919	40,000	Allan Russell Bob McGraw	Carl Mays
26 Dec 1919	100,000		Babe Ruth (2)
15 Dec 1920	50,000	Muddy Ruel Hank Thormahlen Del Pratt Sammy Vick	Waite Hoyt Wally Schang Mike McNally Harry Harper
20 Dec 1921	150,000	Roger Peckinpaugh Rip Collins Jack Quinn Bill Piercy	Everett Scott Joe Bush Sam Jones
23 Jul 1922	55,000	Elmer Miller Chick Fewster Johnny Mitchell Lefty O'Doul	Joe Dugan Elmer Smith
3 Jan 1923	(3)	Al Devormer	George Pipgras Harvey Hendrick
30 Jan 1923	50,000	George Murray Camp Skinner Norm McMillan	Herb Pennock

(1) Leonard did not report, and the Yankees refunded $10,000.

(2) Owner Jacob Ruppert also made Boston owner Harry Frazee a $300,000 loan secured by a mortgage on Fenway Park.

(3) The Yankees' financial records for 1923 do not show a specific cash outlay for the purchase of Pennock and Pipgras. On September 5, 1922, however, the Yankees gave Boston two notes, totaling $50,000, with no apparent rationale. The Yankees paid the first of these on January 5, 1923, and the second on May 5, 1923. As the two teams had no known transaction between the Dugan and Pipgras deals, the most probable scenario is that these two notes were issued for future-player consideration.

Somewhat quixotically, Stout and Johnson claim that Frazee made sound baseball deals with the Yankees

and that he could not have foreseen what the trades would do for either club. This argument does not hold up either. Ed Barrow, manager of the Red Sox from 1918 through 1920, left the Red Sox and became general manager of the Yankees. Barrow knew the Red Sox players as well as anyone, and he spent the next few years grabbing all of the good players, like future Hall of Fame pitchers Waite Hoyt and Herb Pennock, catcher Wally Schang, shortstop Everett Scott, third baseman Joe Dugan, and pitchers Joe Bush and Sam Jones, among others. In fact Barrow liked his former players enough that he got the Yankee owners to give Frazee $305,000, convincing evidence that both teams agreed that the talent was imbalanced. To argue that Frazee made good deals is to suggest both that Barrow and the Yankees somehow lucked into their dynasty and that the money was not the central piece of the deal for Frazee.

In July 1923, Frazee sold the team for $1.15 million—$850,000 for the team plus the assumption of Ruppert's $300,000 mortgage—to a group led by baseball man Bob Quinn (see Mort Bloomberg's article at page 9) and money partner Palmer Winslow.[32] Under the terms in the draft contract available in the Harry Frazee Papers, Quinn's group paid $350,000 down ($150,000 went to pay off Frazee's refinanced note to Taylor for his preferred stock) and then $500,000 over the next eight years.

During the 1920s, Frazee continued to produce plays, and in 1924 he launched his biggest hit, *No, No, Nanette.* It opened in Detroit and achieved hit status several weeks later when it reopened at the Harris Theater in Chicago after some fine-tuning by Frazee. A year later Frazee opened the musical on Broadway to popular acclaim, in line with the top productions of the era. It ran for 321 shows,

> considerably fewer than the 477 for *Wildflower*, the Youmans hit that preceded it, or 352 for *Hit the Deck*, which followed it. But the short run could be easily excused: Audiences in New York were already so familiar with the show from its Chicago and road success that they did not have to see it on Broadway to enjoy it.[33]

As his tax records indicate, Frazee netted more than $300,000 on *No, No, Nanette* in 1925, by far his most profitable year ever.

After *No, No, Nanette*, Frazee opened only one more Broadway production, *Yes, Yes, Yvette*, which flopped and was cancelled after forty performances.[24] He died on June 4, 1929, from Bright's disease, a kidney ailment. Frazee, a Mason, had no religious service;
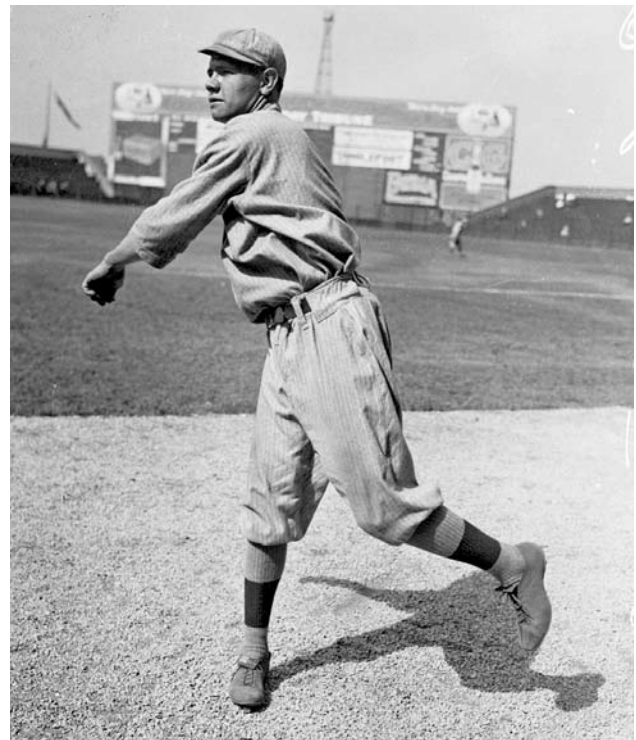
Ruth's pitching heroics for the Red Sox included 23 wins in 1916, 24 in 1917, and remarkable performances in two World Series, recording a 14-inning complete-game win against the Brooklyn Robins in 1916 and going 2–0 (2 runs in 17 innings) against the Cubs in 1918.

Masonic rites were performed by Judge Peter Schmuck as chaplain. New York mayor Jimmy Walker delivered the eulogy.[35]

FRAZEE AND THE PRESS

By the time of Frazee's death, the reasons for his dismantling of the Red Sox (to raise cash) had become the accepted wisdom. In his syndicated column just before Frazee died, Westbrook Pegler of the *Chicago Tribune* compared the destruction of the Red Sox to the case of the Giants' Phil Douglas offering to throw a game in exchange for money. "The drunken pitcher would have done the same things to the Giants that Mr. Harry Frazee did to the Red Sox, *only to a much smaller degree*," Pegler wrote.[36] Upon Frazee's death in June 1929, the Associated Press story claimed that, after the World Series triumph of 1918, Frazee "began meeting his obligations by converting star Boston players into cash."[37]

Sportswriters began to vilify Frazee's destruction of the Red Sox by the middle of the 1920s as the magnitude of the Yankees dynasty and the depth of the Red Sox ineptitude became clear. Of particular interest to this story are the views of Shirley Povich, a prominent Jewish sportswriter (see page 37) for the

Harry Frazee with Boston mayor Andrew Peters and Red Sox first baseman Dick Hoblitzel in happier days. By the end of his tenure as owner, Frazee had sold many of his top players to the Yankees for $470,000, as he struggled to settle with former Red Sox owner Lannin and to finance his purchase of a theater in New York. When the Yankees won their first World Series in 1923, half their lineup and most of their starting rotation consisted of players Frazee had sold them.

Washington Post for seven decades. On Bill Carrigan's return to manage the Red Sox in 1926, Povich wrote that Carrigan would never have worked for Frazee, who "dispos[ed] of his good ball players to the highest bidder."[38] A year later, in a story about his hometown Senators, Povich wrote that "cash does not have the same magnetic property . . . it boasted a few years ago, when Harry Frazee was selling Boston Red Sox in wholesale consignments to the Yankees."[39] In a story about Tom Yawkey's purchase of the team in 1933, Povich sounded the same theme: "Frazee proceeded immediately to wreck the team."[40]

More telling still is an Associated Press story that ran when Ruth was acquired by the Boston Braves in 1935. "And Boston fans," wrote the AP, "who still shudder when the name of the late Harry Frazee is mentioned, will never forget how he ruined a championship club to make the Yankees a winner."[41]

When Lieb's history of the Red Sox was published in early 1947, it received a generally favorable review from Harold Kaese, one of the more respected Boston writers at the time. In recounting the section on Frazee, he wrote that a "mass transferral of manpower led to the long period of Yankee supremacy, while wrecking the Red Sox until Tom Yawkey bought them in 1933." Kaese says of the book that "little that has not been hitherto revealed is brought to light." Including, of course, Lieb's even-handed and decidedly accurate account of Harry Frazee's gutting of the Red Sox for cash.

Having written all of this, we can easily see how an indictment of Frazee could go too far. What Frazee did to the Red Sox—sell off the assets of a championship club without reinvesting in other players—has been done many times in baseball history, including twice by the much revered Connie Mack. Frazee was a man struggling to pay his bills, and he was able to sell all of his good players and then sell the club at a profit. There is a certain charm in his brazenness.

Has there been a tendency on the part of some Red Sox fans to blame Harry Frazee for the team's entire 85-year-championship drought, fans who believed that Frazee's dealing of Ruth placed a curse on the club? We doubt the prevalence of this point of view among serious observers but, to the extent that Frazee was blamed for the state of the franchise beyond the mid-1930s, that is obviously unfair. The club was economically competitive once Tom Yawkey bought the team, and other scapegoats will have to be found for the years between 1933 and 2003. But for Frazee's tenure at the helm, the historical record is clear. The Boston Red Sox won the World Series in 1918, and over the next five years Harry Frazee sold Babe Ruth and other players to the Yankees for $470,000. The shell of a baseball team he sold in 1923 was the doormat of the league until Tom Yawkey reinvigorated the franchise a decade later. ■

The "Jew"

On what evidence have Glenn Stout and others come to reject the conventional wisdom and revise the historical record, effectively exonerating Frazee from the wrecking of his team? Stout attributes Frazee's problems with Ban Johnson and his later negative portrayal in the press to anti-Semitism. According to Stout, Ban Johnson and Fred Lieb were anti-Semitic. Therefore Johnson's actions and Lieb's writing should be disregarded as the work of bigots. Relative to Stout's charge, two items are clear. First, regardless of the motivation of Frazee's detractors, the historical record is unmistakable: Frazee sold Ruth and others because he needed money for his theatrical ventures and baseball debts, not as a way to improve his ballclub. Second, his charge of anti-Semitism is baseless.

Although Frazee was a Mason and his activities of a religious nature were generally focused on Freemasonry, he came from a well-established line of Presbyterians, which the family traced back to colonial times.[42] Stout postulates that both the general public and close associates believed Frazee was Jewish because of a couple of relatively flimsy details: Frazee, born in Peoria, Illinois, was a New York theatrical producer, an occupation with a disproportionate number of Jews; and an article in the *Dearborn Independent*, a virulently anti-Semitic weekly published by Henry Ford, referred to him as a Jew in an article headlined "How Jews Degraded Baseball" (September 10, 1921).

The reference in the *Independent* is the solitary piece of evidence we are aware of suggesting Frazee was Jewish, and it needs to be viewed with a healthy dose of skepticism. Regarding its accuracy, on occasion Ford referred to people as Jews if he disliked them and they exhibited what he considered Jewish characteristics, even if they were not actually Jewish.[43] It is certainly possible that readers—even sympathetic ones—would not have taken all of Ford's accusations literally. (Ford did not write the articles; he conveyed his themes and thoughts to writer William Cameron, who then articulated them in print.)

Furthermore, by late 1921 the impact of the *Independent* within mainstream society was waning. As historian Neil Baldwin points out, the *Independent*'s circulation in late 1920 was about 300,000, but by early 1921 it had fallen to less than half that. Ford initially urged his car dealers to purchase the weekly and pressed them to sell subscriptions to their customers. Many bought them on their own or for their friends and families simply to placate Ford. As these burned off and were not renewed, circulation fell.[44] To put the circulation in context, in 1920 there were at least ten magazines with a circulation of more than one million.[45] A review of Ayer's annual directory of circulation indicates that in 1920 roughly 85 magazines had a circulation of at least 300,000.[46] Obviously a magazine with such a divisive theme and well-known publisher could attract attention disproportionate to its circulation, but it was clearly a small voice among many competing interests.

Perhaps even more significantly, in response to the *Independent*'s maliciousness, a statement titled "The Perils of Racial Prejudice" and undersigned by more than one hundred well-known Americans, including two presidents and president-elect Warren Harding, was published in many newspapers around the country on January 16, 1921. Baldwin, quoting an historian of anti-Semitism, argues that, several weeks after this piece appeared, "it was clear that Henry Ford stood alone in the United States."[47] And so, by the time the article implying that Frazee was a Jew appeared in September, the *Independent* had been marginalized, even if it remained a terrifying channel for anti-Semitism. The point here is not to minimize the danger from even peripheral voices of hate but to highlight how many people in the mainstream may not have seen the reference to Frazee as a Jew or may not have believed it if they did.

The Frazee Papers include many items one might expect, such as personal tax records, receipts on his theater productions, and business correspondence. They also include a

wide range of other material—tax-record notes scribbled on scraps of paper or the backs of envelopes, press clippings about his son being jailed for speeding, unredeemed baseball tickets, a letter from a young man requesting employment. In all of this material, other than a copy of the offending *Dearborn Independent*, we could find no references to, or implications of, Frazee's supposed Judaism.

In fact, we came across only two "religious" references in all of his collected papers. These are two undated Christmas cards, which the Frazees sent out. One says "Yo Ho and a Merry Christmas. Mr. and Mrs. Harry Herbert Frazee." The other, underneath a picture of a dog pulling the leash held by a couple of children, reads: "The Frazee jrs. Ann, Harry, Harry III, Robert & 'the Duke' himself, are pulling for a Merry Xmas and a Happy New Year to all."

Frazee's papers also depict his close relationship with aviator Charles Lindbergh. Frazee organized the banquet for Lindbergh in New York City after Lindbergh's transatlantic flight in 1927, and Lindbergh stayed at Frazee's home after the flight. Although there is some debate about Lindbergh's level of anti-Semitism, it is unquestioned that he was an unrepentant eugenicist, that he made anti-Semitic speeches before the United States' entry into World War II, and that he had a close relationship with Henry Ford. After his transatlantic flight, Lindbergh could have stayed at any home in America. Would he really have chosen to stay at the home of someone perceived to be a Jew?

In sum, we find it highly unlikely that the Peoria-born Frazee, who sent out Christmas cards and was descended from a long line of Presbyterians, would be mistaken as Jewish. Moreover, the two individuals Stout most specifically charged with anti-Semitism in their treatment of Frazee—Johnson and Lieb—both knew Frazee well and would have known whether he was Jewish. And even if they did believe he was, can we really determine that their deeds and words were dictated by anti-Semitism? What evidence is there that the two men hated Jews at all?

The single item of circumstantial evidence for Johnson's anti-Semitism is that, in contrast to the National League, the American League, after its inaugural 1901 season (when the majority Baltimore stockholder was Sidney Frank, who was Jewish) had no Jewish owner until after Johnson left the presidency in 1927. This is a flimsy piece of evidence on which to tar a man. Moreover, that a Jewish owner still did not come into the American League until after 1946 partially exonerates Johnson from being singled out as uniquely anti-Semitic.[48] A strain of anti-Semitism in the form of negative Jewish stereotypes and quotas limiting Jews in colleges and occupations was common in the early twentieth century. This may have been in play among baseball executives, but it seems unreasonable to single out Johnson.

Stout and Johnson also theorize that Frazee sold Ruth to bolster his alliance with the Yankees owners against Johnson. This argument makes no sense. Most obviously, there is no cause and effect between the sale and the bolstering of the alliance unless one claims that Ruth was sold at a large discount in exchange for a nebulous agreement from the Yankees owners to support Frazee against Johnson. One cannot suggest that Ruth was a detriment to the Red Sox (as Stout does) and simultaneously claim he was worth *more* than $100,000. More importantly, the Yankees owners were even more at the forefront of the imbroglio with Johnson than was Frazee; they would have needed Frazee's support against Johnson more than vice versa. Any transaction between the Yankees owners and Frazee was a consequence of their social relationship and alliance against Johnson, not a cause. Johnson's feuds with the Yankees owners and with Comiskey were just as bitter as the one with Frazee; there is no reason to attribute anti-Semitism to this quarrel.

Stout wrote that anti-Semitism against Frazee gained traction from the *Dearborn Independent* article, that Frazee received balanced press before the article and generally bad

NATIONAL BASEBALL HALL OF FAME LIBRARY, COOPERSTOWN, N.Y.

Fred Lieb, who in his 1947 history of the Red Sox showed Frazee sacrificing the Red Sox's future to his theater business.

press after it.[49] But the *Independent* article ran in September 1921; Johnson's feud with Frazee was most bitter in the years 1917 to 1920. By the end of the 1921 season both Frazee, with his lousy team, and Johnson, now second fiddle to newly appointed commissioner Kenesaw Mountain Landis, were largely irrelevant. Furthermore, if the baseball press was more critical of Frazee after the fall of 1921, it is certainly understandable. The Red Sox finished in last place in eight of the nine years following the publication of the *Dearborn Independent* article, while the Yankees won pennants with stars purchased in Frazee's fire sale. One would expect his press coverage to change as the reality of the pillaging of his team began to take hold. In 1920 there were members of the press who bought his line about reinvesting the money he received from the Ruth sale. Once it became clear that he would not, and would also pocket $300,000 more from the Yankees, his defenders understandably had dwindled.

Stout saves worse opprobrium for baseball writer Fred Lieb. According to Stout, the anti-Frazee sentiment died down for twenty years after Frazee's departure from the baseball scene, only to be reintroduced by Lieb in his 1947 history of the Red Sox. (As noted in the main body of this article, this is false.) "Yet underneath his button-down exterior," Stout writes, "Lieb was rife with prejudice."[50] Unfortunately, Stout's evidence for Lieb's anti-Semitism is embarrassingly thin, amounting to Lieb holding "the easy anti-Semitism so rampant within American society during the era between the wars."[51] Lieb was a giant in his profession for more than sixty years, and any prejudices he may have held (and we know of none) did not extend to his writing.

In an article in *The Sporting News* (September 12, 1935), Lieb directly addresses the issue of Jews in baseball. This lengthy piece, published years before Lieb's supposed anti-Semitic book on the Red Sox, focused on Hank Greenberg as the greatest Jewish baseball player, but Lieb also included the top Jewish players at each position; what Lieb described as "a first class all-Jewish team could now be picked from major leaguers past and present."[52] Lieb began the article by trying to answer the question "Why isn't there a real outstanding Jewish ballplayer?" He answers that "it was my theory that the race had been held back in developing along baseball lines by lack of opportunity." Lieb continues: "It was my contention the Jew did not possess the background of sport that was the heritage of the Irish. . . . Therefore he became an individualist in sport, a skillful boxer and ring strategist, but he did not have the background to stand out in a sport which is so essentially a team game as baseball."

This could be read unsympathetically, but Lieb follows up in the next paragraph with the argument that "this theory may once have had something to it, but in the past few years, it has been knocked into a cocked hat by the big bat of Hefty Hank Greenberg of Detroit and the Bronx." The rest of the article raves about Hank Greenberg and his excellent chance to be the American League's Most Valuable Player, points out how the New York teams let Greenberg slip away, and discusses the positive performances of other Jewish major leaguers. Throughout the article, Lieb's tone is supportive and appreciative.

Stout also imputes anti-Semitism to Lieb because of Lieb's belief in the occult. While Lieb was an occultist, we have been unable to find an association that would make him anti-Semitic. In *Sight Unseen*, one of his two books on the occult, Lieb claimed that Mark Anthony—in Lieb's story Antony spelled his name with an *h*—communicated with him and his wife through their Ouija board. Lieb described Anthony's thoughts on current events (the book was published in 1939): "He is anti-Mussolini . . . he is more friendly to Hitler. Once he said Hitler's treatment of the Jews was partly justified. Inasmuch as I am of German descent, psychologists might attribute this favorable attitude toward Hitler to personal leanings in my subconscious mind, but neither my wife nor I are admirers of the Führer; being religious and political liberals and friends of humanity we strongly condemn his intolerance, his gag on free speech and his medieval anti-Semitic crusade."[53]

Lieb later tells the story of Jewish umpire Albert "Dolly" Stark favorably and sympathetically. Lieb admired Stark's single-minded determination to reach the major leagues, a virtue that eventually paid off when he became one of baseball's top umpires in the 1930s. Lieb is sensitive to Stark's disillusionment on finally reaching his goal and uses him as a sympathetic figure of what happens when one directs his single-mindedness toward earthly goals.[54]

Lieb also wrote a popular history of the Pittsburgh Pirates. He writes admiringly about Jewish owner Barney Dreyfuss: "When the former Paducah bookkeeper closed his earthly books, his contribution to baseball was large. He was one of the game's greatest and most far-seeing club owners."[55] Yet we are to believe that Lieb decided to destroy Frazee's reputation (it was already ruined) because he was Jewish (he wasn't)? This simply does not agree with the record of Lieb's long and distinguished writing career, in which he repeatedly wrote favorably of other Jewish baseball people.

To further make his flimsy case, Stout attempts to tie Lieb to Henry Ford through Lieb's acquaintances. Stout writes that "Lieb was almost certainly aware of the *Independent*. He was well read and the first editor of the *Independent* was journalist E. G. Pipp, uncle of Yankee first baseman Wally Pipp, who Lieb regularly covered on the Yankee beat. Detroit sportswriter H. G. Salsinger, a close friend of Lieb, occasionally contributed innocuous baseball features to the *Independent*."[56]

As if that is not enough of a stretch, E. G. Pipp was not anti-Semitic, and he strongly objected to the anti-Semitic content of the paper. In April 1920, he resigned in disgust as editor of the *Independent*, before the publication of the first anti-Semitic article on May 22, 1920. E. G. Pipp went on to found a newspaper to counter Ford's anti-Semitism.[57] Additionally, that a baseball-writing colleague "occasionally contributed innocuous baseball features to the *Independent*" is absurd evidence that Lieb shared Ford's anti-Semitism. Stout himself writes that Salsinger's articles were "occasional" and "innocuous." Undoubtedly, given the easy anti-Semitism of the era, Lieb had friends who held negative stereotypes of Jews. To jump from this to claim that Lieb's accurate portrayal of Frazee was driven by anti-Semitism is fantastic.

Ironically, Stout's complete lack of documentary evidence (supporting the charge of anti-Semitism directed against Frazee) is precisely the criticism Stout levels at Fred Lieb. Contrary to Stout's assertion that Frazee died with his reputation intact and that it remained so until Lieb smeared him in 1947, Lieb's sympathetic treatment did nothing to change the generally held opinion of Frazee. The story of Harry Frazee recounted by Fred Lieb in his book, an account no different from the commonly accepted view, is well told and fundamentally true.

Notes

1. Fred Lieb, *The Boston Red Sox* (New York: Putnam, 1947).
2. Glenn Stout and Richard A. Johnson, *Red Sox Century* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 2000).
3. The most extensive treatment of his Frazee thesis is "A 'Curse' Born of Hate," by Glenn Stout, ESPN.com, 3 October 2004, http://sports.espn.go.com/mlb/playoffs2004/news/story?page=Curse041005.
4. Frazee Papers, Harry Ransom Humanities Research Center, University of Texas at Austin; hereinafter, Frazee Papers.
5. *Boston Globe*, 11 February 1920. Two documents from the early 1920s refer to Frazee's 70 percent interest: a draft refinancing agreement from May 1921 that was apparently never consummated, and a Frazee financial statement for year ended 31 October 1922. It is certainly possible that Frazee's interest had changed slightly since he first acquired an interest in the team several years earlier, but this would not affect the basic outline of his finances.
6. *Boston Globe*, 11 February 1920.
7. The Frazee Papers contain a letter dated 12 January 1920, from attorney T. J. Barry to Frazee, conveying an alternative mortgage loan proposal from a potential lender other than Yankee owner Jacob Ruppert. In the proposal reference is made to the fact that the "present de facto Trustees are Messrs. Taylor, Lannin and Lannin. The records at the registry of deeds do not show that . . . the election of Messrs. Lannin and Lannin were accomplished in accordance with the requirements of the declaration of trust."
8. The dividend rate on the preferred stock and the interest rate on the loan proposal in note 7 above were both 6 percent, as was the rate on the notes taken back by Frazee in the Ruth sale.
9. Daniel E. Ginsberg, *The Fix Is In: A History of Baseball Gambling and Game Fixing Scandals* (Jefferson, N.C.: McFarland, 1995), 84–85.
10. Letter from New York Yankees documents auctioned by Sotheby's, 24 June 2006.
11. Frazee Papers.
12. Frazee Papers.
13. Frazee Papers.
14. Tino Balio and Robert G. McLaughlin, "The Economic Dilemma of the Broadway Theatre: A Cost Study," *Educational Theatre Journal* 21, no. 1 (March 1969): 82.
15. Frazee Papers.
16. Jack Poggi, *Theatre in America: The Impact of Economic Forces, 1870–1967* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1968), 29–33, 51–52.
17. The letter does not specifically state the name of the play, but the relatively large dollar amounts and that "Nothing But the Truth" was the only Frazee show running anywhere near 1917 make it almost certain that Weber was referring to "Nothing But the Truth."
18. *New York Times*, 23 August 1933.
19. Freyer Realty Company tax returns for 1920, 1921, 1922, 1923, and 1924, Frazee Papers.
20. Stout mistakenly believes that this mortgage was not part of the Ruth sale; see, for example, Glenn Stout in *When Boston Still Had the Babe: The 1918 Champion Red Sox*, edited by Bill Nowlin (Boston: Rounder Books, 2008), 166. This view is certainly incorrect; the mortgage loan of $300,000 was an integral component of the Ruth transaction. In addition to the document quoted below, Ruppert wrote: "We paid $100,000 for Ruth. And I personally made a loan of $370,000 [sic] to Frazee, taking a mortgage on Fenway Park as security" (*New York World-Telegram*, 19 February 1938). Moreover, Lannin expected a mortgage loan to be part of Frazee's capital raising. In a letter (11 January 1920) to Frazee, pleading for his money, he wrote: "I was mightily pleased to learn from you yesterday that you had arranged your finances so that permanent loans may be placed on the Park and that it is now only a matter of retiring the bonds [the existing mortgage that took Frazee another couple of months to clear up]. Even more convincingly, on 19 January 1920, Ruppert's attorneys sent Frazee a letter stating that they had received the invoices and asking for payment to the real-estate appraisers who "supplied us with the valuations of Fenway Park, which were necessary to be submitted to Col. Ruppert before he could make a decision as to whether to agree to make a loan against mortgage."
21. Edward Grant Barrow, with James M. Kahn, *My Fifty Years in Baseball* (New York: Coward-McCann, 1951), 108.
22. Colonel Jacob Ruppert, as told to Dan Daniel, "Behind the Scenes of the Yankees," *New York World-Telegram*, 19 February 1938.
23. Bozeman Bulger, "The Baseball Business from the Inside," *Collier's*, 25 March 1922.
24. Lieb, *The Boston Red Sox*, 178, 182–83.
25. Robert Creamer, *Babe: The Legend Comes to Life* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1992), 208.
26. Frazee Papers.
27. *Boston Globe*, 11 February 1920.
28. Creamer, *Babe: The Legend Comes to Life*, 209.
29. *Boston Globe*, 11 February 1920.
30. Boston Red Sox, 1920 financial statements, Frazee Papers.
31. *Boston Globe*, 6 January 1920.
32. James Quirk and Rodney W. Fort, *Pay Dirt: The Business of Professional Team Sports* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1992), 401; draft purchase and sale agreement, Frazee Papers.
33. Don Dunn, *The Making of No, No, Nanette* (Citadel Press, 1972), 38.
34. Internet Broadway Database, www.ibdb.com.
35. *New York Times*, 5 June 1929.
36. Westbrook Pegler, in *Chicago Daily Tribune*, 8 May 1929, p. 29.
37. Associated Press, in *Hartford Courant*, 5 June 1929, p. 1.
38. Shirley Povich, in *Washington Post*, 14 December 1926, p. 17.
39. Shirley Povich, in *Washington Post*, 2 December 1927, p. 15.
40. Shirley Povich, in *Washington Post*, 27 February 1933, p. 29.
41. Associated Press, in *Hartford Courant*, 27 February 1935, p. 11.
42. Frances Frazee Hamilton, *Ancestral Lines of the Doniphan, Frazee and Hamilton Families* (W. M. Mitchell Printing, 1928).
43. Neil Baldwin, *Henry Ford and the Jews: The Mass Production of Hate* (New York: Public Affairs, 2001), 106, 243–44.
44. Ibid., 146.
45. Carl F. Kaestle et al., *Literacy in the United States: Readers and Reading Since 1880* (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 1991), 263.
46. *N. W. Ayer and Son's American Newspaper Annual and Directory, 1920*.
47. Baldwin, *Henry Ford and the Jews*, 150–51.
48. Michael T. Lynch Jr., *Harry Frazee, Ban Johnson, and the Feud that Nearly Destroyed the American League* (Jefferson, N.C.: McFarland, 2008), 162.
49. Glenn Stout, "A 'Curse' Born of Hate," http://sports.espn.go.com/mlb/playoffs2004/news/story?page=Curse041005.
50. Ibid.
51. Ibid.
52. *The Sporting News*, at Paper of Record, http://www.paperofrecord.com.
53. Frederick G. Lieb, *Sight Unseen: A Journalist Visits the Occult* (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1939), 112.
54. Ibid., 227–29.
55. Frederick G. Lieb, *The Pittsburgh Pirates* (1948; Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 2003), 47.
56. Glenn Stout, "A 'Curse' Born of Hate," http://sports.espn.go.com.
57. Stock Maven, at http://www.stockmaven.com/logsdon99_F.htm; http://freemasonry.bcy.ca/anti-masonry/dearborn.html; Baldwin, *Henry Ford and the Jews*, 98–100.

George H. Lawson

The Rogue Who Tried to Reform Baseball

Jerry Kuntz

Few men appear to have been less qualified to take a stand against professional baseball's greatest shame, the unwritten "color line" that segregated the sport for seventy years, than George H. Lawson (1864–1927). Lawson lived in the shadow of his more notorious brother, Alfred W. Lawson (1869–1954), a longtime minor-league manager and promoter who, as a player, had a brief three-game stint in the weakened National League of 1890. Al Lawson was a restless, innovative, but mostly infamous figure in the baseball community between 1890 and 1916, thanks to his tendency to abandon players, teams, and leagues when his own interests were threatened. He eventually moved on to the fields of aviation, dietetics, philosophy, economic reform, and religion, building a following that some have labeled a cult. Alfred Lawson has often been cited as the foremost American eccentric—even his homespun system of physics (a component of the philosophy of "Lawsonomy") included a key principle, "Zig-Zag-and-Swirl," that posits that everything in the universe moves eccentrically.

George Lawson, Alfred's brother, had less practical experience in baseball but tried to match his brother's bluster as a promoter of new leagues. The evidence of those attempts made brief headlines between 1910 and 1926. However, recent research into George Lawson's life has revealed a career full of aliases, criminal acts, debauchery, sociopathic tendencies, misogyny, quackery, and deception. In comparison, George Lawson makes his brother Alfred Lawson appear to be the soul of reason. Some small degree of recognition is due George Lawson for carrying the standard against racism in sport when so few others were willing to join him. However, his motives, as well as his actions after 1921, bring into question whether he can be credited with any real moral courage for his efforts to break the color line.

George Herman Lawson was born in the slums of London, England, in 1864, the son of Robert H. Lawson and Mary Ann Anderson Lawson. His mother's maiden name, Anderson, was the source of the nickname he used for many of his baseball ventures: Andy Lawson. He also often used it to embellish his full name to George Herman Anderson Lawson. The family immigrated to Windsor, Canada, in 1869, and three years later moved to the Detroit area. When just sixteen, George H. Lawson left home and returned to his family's old neighborhood in the East End of London. He soon enlisted in the British army and during the period 1881–86 served at postings in Ireland and India. He saw no fighting, but, like many of his fellow soldiers, he was hospitalized several times with gonorrhea and syphilis. He exhibited delusions of grandeur and was eventually diagnosed as "manic," an archaic medical term that could signify a range of mental disorders. Interestingly, his medical record described his illness as inherited rather than due to venereal disease, suggesting a congenital personality disorder. He was sent to an asylum in India, then back to the major military hospital in England, and, finally, invalided out of the service in December 1886.[1]

AN EVENTFUL (BUT SKETCHY) BASEBALL CAREER IS LAUNCHED

Lawson returned to North America and married his first wife, Nana, in Ontario in March 1888. No evidence has yet surfaced that George Lawson participated in baseball before 1895, when he was 31 years old. In August of that year, George's brother Alfred organized a team in Boston of "amateur" college players. Their intent was to tour England, playing against teams of the National Base Ball Association of Great Britain and the London Base Ball Association. Al Lawson recruited players allegedly from Harvard, Yale, and Princeton, but those schools have no records matching the names of Lawson's players. The only non–Ivy League background of a player given to newspapers was that of an outfielder, George Anderson. However, one paper, the *New York Times*, reported the players' names, replacing "Anderson" with his real name: George H. Lawson, "formerly of Ann Arbor University."[2] Not surprisingly, Ann Arbor University (as the University of Michigan was then informally known) has no record of George Lawson's enrollment.

Only one detailed box score out of the 19 games the Boston Amateurs played on this tour has come to light, and George is not in that lineup. Little, therefore, is known about his playing skills. The tour itself, which was originally to include 40 games and excursions into Scotland and France, scaled back its announced plans to 25 games. However, the tour

collapsed within two weeks owing to low gate receipts. The Americans were surprised by the low ticket prices, as English baseball relied more heavily on club subscriptions rather than the gate. Poor publicity and hasty scheduling also contributed to the tour's failure.[3] Al Lawson, in typical fashion, had previously secured a ticket to Paris and used it, while his players were stranded without hotel money to tide them over until they could board their ship home.

George Lawson returned to his home in Boston, only to discover that his wife had left town in the company of another man. What then took place is a curiosity of nineteenth-century journalism. The *Boston Globe* ran a story that originated from Pittsburgh:

> Geo. H. Lawson, manager of the amateur base-ball team which went to England this summer, was in the city today with blood in his eye and a gun in his pocket. . . . He was about as angry a man as ever chased an absent wife, and as he boarded a train today for the windy city [he had tracked the fleeing couple first to Pittsburgh and then Chicago] he declared that he would continue the chase until some one got hurt.[4]

One has to wonder how a newspaper could report a crime that was merely threatened. Was a *Globe* reporter in Pittsburgh, and did he run into Lawson by happenstance? Or did Lawson himself wire the story to the *Globe*, thinking that his threats might eventually reach his errant spouse? At any rate, he appears not to have killed anyone, but Nana Lawson did ultimately divorce Lawson in 1897. Alfred Lawson, meanwhile, was mightily annoyed that his brother was misidentified in the *Globe* as the manager of the touring team, since that mention caused a misunderstanding between Al and a lady friend. It was the beginning of a public rift that divided the two brothers the rest of their lives.

At different points over the next two decades, both George and Alfred would deny that they were related to one another, although their reason could have been only to placate local citizens who had heard of the *other* Lawson's baseball misdeeds. However, in some situations, George was quick to mention that he was the brother of a former major-league player. Sportswriters who learned of their relation assumed the two Lawsons colluded in their ventures, but the evidence suggests that George had none of Al Lawson's baseball acumen and that George followed in his brother's footsteps in order to see his own name in print and to capitalize on his brother's occasional successes. For
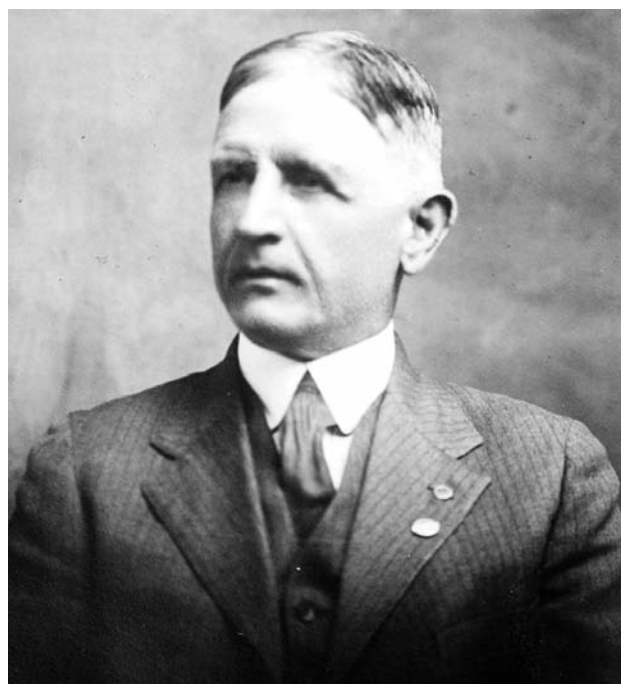
George H. Lawson (1864–1927), promoter of various baseball leagues, including the United States League, which drew attention for his announcement that he would sign African American players. After a modest launch in spring 1910, the league was disbanded in May, a few weeks into the season.

his part, Al Lawson seems to have viewed George as a pest who hounded his every baseball move.

The first example of this pattern occurred in 1897. That spring, Al Lawson organized an independent team in North Adams, Massachusetts, and tried to form a league in the Berkshires. Al Lawson's "Lawsonites" played an impressive independent schedule, and he seemed to be a capable manager and owner. Meanwhile, across the state, George Lawson blew into Lawrence, Massachusetts, in mid-June and told reporters that he was organizing a team there and also would form a Merrimack Valley League. Local sporting men in Lawrence—and in the prospective league towns that George Lawson named—heard of these plans for the first time when they read them in the newspaper. George Lawson's grand vision turned out to be just hot air.[5]

The next spring, both brothers were up to their usual shenanigans. Al Lawson secured a team for Manchester, New Hampshire, and made efforts to organize a New Hampshire League. Al Lawson's Manchester team took the field for a few games in late April. Twenty-five miles to the south, George Lawson popped up in Nashua, New Hampshire. He secured a field there and also one in Concord, outflanking his brother's moves to start a league. Frustrated, Al

Lawson disappeared from Manchester with the gate receipts before the players' May contracts started. George fielded a Concord team for a few weeks, and then he too threw in the towel. Later, in a *Boston Globe* article in 1923, sportsmen in Concord recalled:

> When he [George] arrived he had with him an attractive young woman as his secretary, occupied a suite of rooms at the best hotel in town, leased the YMCA athletic grounds for a year, advertised for players, ordered handsome uniforms, announced that he would form a State League, and in various ways obtained a large amount of publicity. . . . Three or four games were played with teams from Laconia and Manchester [after Al Lawson had already left], but the gate receipts were not large either at home or abroad, and 'Andy' disappeared.[6]

Both Lawsons blamed their 1898 disasters on bad weather and a scarcity of players because of the Spanish–American War.

The Lawsons descended on Indiana in spring 1899. Al Lawson shaped a team for the town of Anderson and called together other unaffiliated town teams to form the Indiana-Illinois (Two-I) League. It started its schedule in early May. On May 27, Lawson took his team to play against Muncie and was distraught to find that Muncie was being managed by "George Anderson"—his brother George, using an alias. Their confrontation made headlines back east, where, the *Boston Globe* reported, with understatement, that "there had been ill-feeling between the brothers for some time."[7] The Two-I League dissolved in early June, and Al Lawson left Indiana to pursue a scheme to bring the first All Cubans team over to tour America. George, however, moved from Muncie and took control of the team in Kokomo, Indiana, which became a founding member of a more limited Indiana State League. George Lawson was unable to meet the team's first payroll, and two of his players gave him a savage beating, forcing him to be hospitalized. When informed of George's fate, brother Al was reported by the *North Adams Transcript* to be "evidently much disgusted with the lack of finesse shown by his brother in not getting out of town ahead of the game."[8] Perhaps he was just disgusted with his brother's antics in general.

Chastened, George Lawson abandoned the field of sports for several years. He returned to Boston and in late 1899 married his second wife, Olivia. Lawson took up the occupation of selling sewing machines—a vocation that one of his other brothers, Donald Lawson, followed to become a regional sales manager for Singer. By early January 1902, Olivia Lawson had fled to the hinterlands of Boise, Idaho, and remarried within days of her arrival. In retrospect, it was probably the smart thing to do.

PROFESSOR LAWSON HERMANN, HYPNOTIST

George was impatient with the life of a salesman, and in 1901 he began self-study of another skill: hypnotism. In July, while still married to Olivia, he began an affair with a woman he met while selling sewing machines door-to-door. According to later court testimony, he made no sale but did convince Mrs. Della Carles (who herself was married) to take hypnosis lessons from him. They began a series of liaisons that occurred two or three times a week, sometimes overnight. Mrs. Carles tried to break it off over dinner at a restaurant. George flew into a rage and shoved her. The manager called the police. As Mrs. Carles fled, Lawson grabbed her purse. Lawson was arrested and charged—not for battery but larceny. He was sentenced to six months in jail.[9]

Imprisonment apparently only gave George Lawson time to hone his skills, for by the fall of 1902 he was touring the East Coast vaudeville circuit as a stage hypnotist. At every stop he publicized his engagement by sensationally announcing that he would bury a hypnotized assistant for a period of days—a stunt that necessarily involved trickery, since hypnotic "trances" last no longer than a normal sleep cycle. The papers of Boston, Philadelphia, Hartford, Wilmington, and Lowell abetted Lawson in his public-relations campaign as he appeared before city councils to get approval or defied police prohibitions against performing the burial stunt.[10]

In January 1903, "Professor Lawson Hermann" brought his act to the Passaic Opera House in New Jersey. He tried to recruit the wife of the theater manager to serve as his assistant. Though Mrs. Sohl appeared to be a willing accomplice, her husband objected. Mr. Sohl broke up a tryst between his wife and Lawson at Lawson's apartment in New York City. Lawson then was booked to appear at another Passaic theater, the Empire. "Prof. Hermann" put his new male stooge, Samuel Powell, in a trance and inside a glass coffin on stage hours before the show. Meanwhile, word that Sohl was looking for Lawson "with ire in his eye and a revolver in his pocket" reached the "Professor," and he failed to appear at his scheduled midnight performance. The *New York Times* reported:

The big audience became impatient, and manager Stein of the Empire became alarmed. The manager hustled around, and after some trouble secured Prof. Tony Frylinck. Prof. Frylinck worked all night before he could awaken the sleeper, and by that time the few weary spectators who had waited to see the upshot were so sleepy themselves that they had lost all interest in Powell, and some of those who had dozed off rather resented his return to consciousness of his surroundings, for Powell when he learned that Hermann had abandoned him was at first greatly alarmed and then waxed exceeding wroth, and expressed his opinion of the professor in language that was as loud as it was emphatic. He says he will never again permit himself to be buried alive.[11]

Lawson found a new female assistant, Helen Lenten, who became his third wife in 1903. In 1904, he brought his vaudeville act to Hartford, Connecticut. After a few performances, he and Helen settled in the city and he earned a modest living selling sewing machines from a storefront. During that time, Lawson hatched a much darker plan for using his hypnotic talents. He began to place in the Hartford papers ads claiming that "Prof. G. Hermann Lawson" could perform miracle cures for chronic medical conditions, and he scheduled appointments at his "sanitarium." His practice, which probably consisted of dispensing placebos and hypnotic pain-control suggestions, proved to be lucrative. Soon he was waving around rolls of bills in local saloons. He paid for a new-fangled REO automobile in cash. He was arrested on two occasions for drunkenness, and one of those episodes resulted in bruises on Helen Lawson's face and neck.

The Hartford Medical Board finally caught up with Lawson in early 1906 and slapped him with an ineffectual $100 fine. Lawson kept on advertising, taking new patients, and appealed the fine. Creditors, not medical officials, finally forced the Lawsons out of Hartford.[12] They moved south to Wilmington, Delaware, where they repeated the same scam. However, Delaware officials discovered his Hartford history and moved swiftly to charge him with medical malpractice. In February 1907, his first trial on those charges resulted in a hung jury.[13] A month later, George Lawson assumed the name "James Anderson" and insinuated himself as the owner of the Greensburg club of the new Western Pennsylvania League. The president of this short-lived league was yet another Lawson brother, Alexander J. Lawson (who earned the nickname "Runaway Alex"—don't ask).[14] A few weeks into

the season, on May 22, "James Anderson" disappeared from Greensburg, leaving the club broke.

To hedge his bets against being able to continue his career as a medical quack, George Lawson romanced one of his patients, Mary Gregg Chandler, the elderly, wealthy daughter of a former Wilmington sheriff. Lawson wasted little time in getting his marriage to Helen annulled on the basis that she had never legally divorced her first husband. He was then free to court the attentions of Mary Chandler. Simultaneously, he put out feelers for another baseball venture. In January 1908, George Lawson announced to Philadelphia papers that he was forming a new Pennsylvania–New Jersey League.[15]

George Lawson's new league plans were preempted by a guilty verdict in his second retrial for medical malpractice, which resulted in a one-year prison sentence. Immediately after serving his sentence and being released from jail in March 1909, he married the heiress Mary Chandler. She was then 70 years old, he 45. She doubtless misjudged his true character, which didn't take long to surface. In April 1909 he was arrested for beating her and putting a gun to her head to force her to write him a check.[16] In September she filed for divorce.

UNITED STATES LEAGUE
Left to his own resources, George Lawson returned to Boston and a familiar enterprise. He announced the formation of the United States League in late December 1909 and made the astounding statement that he intended it to be an outlaw league (outside professional baseball's National Agreement stipulations) that would ignore the color line and include black players on rosters of each team. In quick succession, Lawson announced that three members of the barnstorming Cuban (that is, African American) Giants would join the league's Providence team and that Billy Thompson, an African American star of New Hampshire independent teams, would also be signed.[17]

Why did George Lawson take a stand against the color line? It was no secret in the sporting world that black players were talented and could play on a high level—such barnstorming independent teams as the Cuban Giants, Philadelphia Giants, and the New York Gorhams had proved that point. During the few weeks that he actually managed small-city clubs, George Lawson had signed at least one black player—Billy Thompson was a member of his Concord team of 1898. Lawson's stint in the British army in India may have shown him that race was no measure of skill, strength, or courage. More likely, Lawson's father,

Robert Lawson, who had been a lay preacher from a section of London known for its reform politics, taught his sons the errors of prejudice. For whatever reason, Lawson did stake out a position, and many bigots heaped scorn on him, ridiculing the "Black and Tan League."

There was no rush by African American players to join the United States League. Independent black teams (many of which were owned by whites) would have viewed Lawson as competition and discouraged their players from participating. Other early supporters of the United States League appeared to chafe at the increasing publicity given to the league's integration. Efforts to place a franchise in Baltimore, or anyplace else south of the Mason-Dixon Line, were abandoned because of resistance by the local white establishment.

Lawson's shortcomings as an organizer were soon exposed. He had no head for business details, and for too long the league existed with no physical office. To the alarm of some of the prospective owners, Lawson agreed to the idea of letting players in the League unionize. On March 17, 1910, before any team had taken the field, the AFL recognized the players' union.[18] By late March, word of Lawson's recent criminal history and his ex-con status likely forced his resignation as president of the United States League.[19]

The scandal proved too much for many of the backers to bear, and too much time had been lost. The league was scaled back to include only small New England cities, but it never captivated fan interest. The United States League of 1910 disappeared quietly in May, after a few weeks of play. Several of Alfred Lawson's baseball cronies attempted to revive it in 1912. That effort failed too, after a slightly longer run. Veterans of that 1912 version went on to found the Federal League of 1913–15, which was a true attempt at a rival major league. In later years, George Lawson took credit for founding the Federal League, though he was at least two degrees separated from any connection to it.

WORLD WAR I AND THE ALLIED LEAGUE

Uncharacteristically, George Lawson kept his name out of public view during the period 1911–14. When World War I started, he was once again living in Boston and selling sewing machines from an outlet store. When war was declared, he was compelled to answer the call of his native country, Great Britain. He wrote to his old commander, the duke of Connaught, who was currently the governor-general of Canada, and volunteered his services. Despite his age (50) and ghastly service record in the British army (did they check, or were they that

desperate?), George Lawson in 1914 was made the Boston recruiting officer of the Canadian Royal Engineers. He was soon transferred to Montreal, where he contributed to the war effort by helping to ferry men and cavalry horses over to England.

In later years he bestowed hero status on himself for his combat actions, but he mentioned only famous battles in which the Canadian Royal Engineers, notably, had no role. None of his World War I military records have survived, but a photo of Lawson in uniform displays the proper regimental insignia. His claim to have exited with the rank of sergeant major cannot be confirmed. George Lawson emerged from World War I in 1918 as a 54-year-old veteran. On arrival back in the United States, he picked up right where he had left off and announced that he was forming an Allied League, composed solely of war veterans. It was an idea with patriotic appeal, but Lawson was a poor organizer. He was only able to form one "Allied Veterans" team that played a few games against independent teams in Massachusetts and Rhode Island.[20]

In one of life's ironies, a notable historical event that threatened to condemn Lawson to a fate he deserved miraculously released him. After returning home to Boston as a veteran, Lawson committed some unknown crime—probably while drunk and disorderly, possibly involving assault of a police officer— and was sent by the court to a state mental hospital, a sentence that courts of that time frequently imposed. Meanwhile, in September 1919, most of Boston's police force walked off the job in a labor protest over abysmally low wages. Chaos resulted, and rioters wrought destruction on the Boston streets and citizenry. Order was restored by Governor Calvin Coolidge, whose staunch efforts to suppress both the rioters and strikers involved a directive to fire the striking policemen and to use National Guard troops to patrol the streets. Realizing that Boston needed to recruit a wholly new police force, Coolidge shrewdly reasoned that the best candidates were war veterans. He ordered vets confined for minor offenses to be paroled from prisons and asylums. The asylum doors opened to release George Lawson once more on an unsuspecting world. George Lawson was even motivated to run as an independent for the Massachusetts State Assembly against the incumbent local Democratic-machine candidate. His ballot-petition signatures were questioned in court, but his name remained on the slate on election day. He lost.[21]

CONTINENTAL BASEBALL ASSOCIATION

In December 1920, Lawson burst forward onto the national sporting scene with a proposal for a Conti-

nental Baseball Association (more often referred to as the Continental League), an outlaw major league with franchises in Massachusetts, New York, New Jersey, Maryland, Pennsylvania, Indiana, Ohio, and Michigan. Lawson stated that the CBA would use some of the same policies he had set out for the United States League in1910: It would be integrated, it would have no reserve clause and no salary limits, and it would endorse players unionizing and joining the AFL. Lawson's CBA balloon captured perhaps more attention than his 1910 effort, for several reasons. First, the public still had not forgiven the established major leagues for the Black Sox betting scandal of 1919, which many blamed on the greed of owners. Second, Lawson argued that the stalwart combat service of American blacks had disproved the bias against them. Third, the African American community now had a stronger media network, with major newspapers in large eastern cities.

The sports pages of newspapers across the country in January and February 1921 issued new details about the CBA, seemingly on a daily basis. Lawson dropped big names left and right. He would sign seven of the eight Black Sox outcasts; he would lure Honus Wagner out of retirement; he would meet with George M. Cohan about ownership of one of the franchises (when informed that his name had been mentioned, Cohan's response was a classic: "Piffle!"); and Lawson was also in talks with Casey Stengel. Very little of this appeared to be true, but, still, interest in the CBA seemed to grow almost despite Lawson's blather.

This was probably due to the enthusiastic backing of major black newspapers, notably the *Chicago Defender*. In the *New York News*, the progressive black writer and lyricist Andy Razaf (*Ain't Misbehavin,' Honeysuckle Rose*) composed an ode:

Hail to the Continental League,
The Champions of a nobler plan,
Whose motto is "Democracy"
Whose aims are true American.
For they would save the nation's game
And free it from a selfish few;
Who have dishonored it for gain

George M. Cohan (center), "the man who owned Broadway" and a noted baseball fan, at the Polo Grounds for a benefit game for survivors of the Titanic, April 21, 1912. Lawson said he would meet with Cohan about ownership of a franchise in the proposed Continental Baseball Association. Cohan's response to the report: "Piffle!"

And barred the men of darker hue.
The Baseball Park is soon to be
A place where players, white and tan,
Shall demonstrate pure sportsmanship
And man will love his fellow man.
Where grandstand, box, and bleacher crowds
Will feel a new and greater thrill;
When pale and dusky Ruths and Cobbs
Will match their fleetness, nerve and skill.
Proclaim the news from coast to coast,
Let every true, red-blooded fan;
Support the worthy enterprise
Of Andy Lawson and his clan![22]

By early March, Lawson was clearly cultivating black support for the CBA. He promised not to raid the National Negro League, only a year old at that point, for players or to place teams in cities where the National Negro League teams operated. Unlike the situation in 1910, the National Negro League had black ownership, so Lawson was careful not to antagonize their interests, and he stated that he was willing to sign a mutual protection agreement. Plans changed rapidly. First, two entire teams out of the eight in the CBA would be all-black. By March 25, the ratio changed to 50–50, four black teams, four white teams. Two of the league officers, Robert L. Murray and Altamont James Stewart, were African Americans.[23]

However, while these developments were intriguing, white newspapers had dismissed the CBA by mid-March. All mention of George Lawson in connection with the Continental League stopped in mid-April. Many baseball histories wrote the Continental League off as another Lawson Brothers pipedream that never

Alfred W. Lawson (center), brother of George, managed the franchise in Reading, Pennsylvania, to the pennant of the outlaw Atlantic League in 1907.

took the field, and no evidence from the archives of white-run newspapers indicated anything to the contrary. However, on April 23, 1921, the *Chicago Defender* reported that the Philadelphia Continental League team had defeated the Knoxville College nine at an exhibition game in Knoxville. On May 7, the *Defender* stated that the League's schedule had been finalized and that play would begin on May 15. On May 14, the paper ran a complete box score of an exhibition between the Boston Continental League team and the Chelsea Knights of Columbus. On May 21, the box score of a league game between the Boston Pilgrims and the Bronx Giants ran, and on May 28 a short mention was made of the scores of games between Philadelphia and the Bronx.[24] After that, no more scores appear.

REVEREND LAWSON TAKES ON THE KLAN

George Lawson disappeared from media attention for a year and a half, but he began to make headlines again in December 1922. He had gotten religion and set himself up as a storefront evangelist in East Orange, New Jersey. On December 2, the *New York Times* reported that he had taken to the pulpit and publicly prayed to God to deliver him a bride. The story was picked up by papers throughout the United States, and Lawson was labeled as the "Prayer Bride" preacher. His nationwide search for a divinely provided spouse became a running story for nearly a month, and he was flooded with hundreds of letters from women offering themselves in matrimony. Lawson's prayers were finally answered, in mid-January, when a plain-faced, devout, and poor laundrywoman named Ella Wieber took vows uniting her with George Lawson. She was wife number six. Their honeymoon was launched as a two-year national revival-meeting tour.[25]

Rev. Lawson's evangelistic campaign got as far west as Cleveland before the money ran out. Lawson and his bride remained there for a year, and another Lawson sibling, Robert Lawson Jr., gave him a job as a painter and wallpaper hanger. In September 1924, the couple returned to New Jersey, settling in Ella Wieber's hometown of Keyport. Lawson quickly built up large audiences for his street-corner sermons, where a hat was passed for collections. Through Ella's connections, Lawson after a couple of months was able to secure the use of a vacant church, the Centerville Baptist Chapel near Keyport. There was one big catch: Members of the local chapter of the Ku Klux Klan controlled the chapel. Lawson willingly assented to the arrangement, and he gave several sermons in praise of the KKK. He was recognized as a Klan pastor and joined the organization.

Calvin Coolidge, governor of Massachusetts in September 1919, when he fired striking policemen in Boston and decided to recruit a wholly new police force, relying partly on war veterans—a turn of events that ushered George Lawson, a veteran, out of the mental hospital to which he had been confined for some unknown crime.

In the mid-1920s, Klan membership throughout the United States reached its zenith, with many active chapters in the northeastern states. The revival of the Klan had been sparked by the 1915 release of D. W. Griffith's *Birth of a Nation*, which glorified the Klan as an opponent of the evils of Reconstruction. In Northern states, the Klan's membership swelled during a nationwide economic dip in the early 1920s, capitalizing on antiunion sentiment and "Red Scare" fears. There were complex motives for its popularity: Some of its leadership may have seen membership fees as a convenient pyramid scam, while others of its members may have viewed it as just another benign fraternal society. However, no one who listened to Klan rhetoric could ignore that its principles were racist, anti-Catholic, and anti-Semitic.

It did not take long for Lawson and his new masters to clash. Lawson claimed the local leaders had earmarked all the church's collection money for a new Klan building and a new car for the local Kleagle. At the end of December 1924, Lawson resigned from the Klan and complained that he was being threatened.[26] By the following March, the war of nerves reached a new height: Lawson declared himself a candidate for governor of New Jersey on an anti-Klan platform. In April,

he defied Klan death threats and divulged to reporters all the local Klan's passwords, oaths, and fees.

In mid-June 1925, Lawson had to be rescued by a squadron of state police officers after giving a campaign speech in front of a hostile crowd of a thousand Klan supporters in Keansburg, New Jersey. Signs in the Keansburg auditorium displayed Lawson's campaign slogans: "Kan the Klan, Vote for Lawson," and "Lawson, the Visible Foe of the Invisible Empire." After taking the podium, he wasted no time launching into a deflating portrait of the KKK: "The members of the KKK," he thundered, "are a gang of freight car thieves, rum runners, and stool pigeons." He had to be whisked out the back door.[27]

A measure of the nation's racial attitudes could be found in requests made in July 1925 to the Park Commission of Washington, D.C., for permission to hold rallies at the base of the Washington Monument. The Ku Klux Klan's rally application was approved. George Lawson's anti-Klan rally application was rejected. The reason given was that Lawson was a candidate for public office.[28]

After the election that fall (his name may have not even been on the ballot), George Lawson made news again for reverting to his old, bad habits. In late November, police were called to the Lawson residence because of a loud domestic dispute. An enraged Lawson threw dishes at the police chief and leveled a pistol at the arresting officers. While being booked, Lawson had to be clubbed into submission. He was charged with drunkenness and assaulting an officer of the law. At his hearing in January 1926, the judge scolded Lawson for his uncontrolled ego. Lawson begged for parole and promised to leave New Jersey—and even the ministry, if the court so ordered. Instead, he was just told to leave town.[29]

George Lawson's last public act came in December 1926. He was 62 years old and in poor health, with failing eyesight. His sixth wife appears to have left him. However, his indefatigable need for self-promotion was still intact: He called a press conference in New York City and announced the formation of the United States Baseball Association, a new major league. Only a few newspapers ran the story, and then only once.[30] Lawson returned to house painting to earn a living. In February 1927, he fell from a ladder and suffered a cerebral hemorrhage from which he never recovered. He died in a hospital in Newark, New Jersey, on May 18, 1927.

At the time of George Lawson's death, his brother Alfred was working just a few dozen miles away in

the town of Garwood, New Jersey, on his latest and greatest aviation scheme. He had built the cabin for a gargantuan hundred-passenger aircraft and was trying to get the rest of the project funded. The "Lawson Superairliner" was his last stab in the field of aeronautics; it may be that his brother's death helped turn Alfred's attention to the reform of human nature, which he pursued for nearly thirty more years.

The last offense that George Lawson perpetrated on the public was his burial place. He was given a free plot and interred in the American veterans' section of a Newark cemetery. Later, when officials checked records in order to erect a headstone for Lawson, they discovered that he had not served in the armed forces of the United States. No one bothered to relocate his body, and so George H. Lawson's final resting spot is marked by an empty gap in a long row of white gravestones, emblematic of his many shortcomings and unrealized schemes. ■

Notes

1. The British Army Royal Artillery Corps records of George Herman Lawson, 1881–86, including his service and medical records, were obtained from the British National Archives.
2. *New York Times*, 11 August 1895.
3. However, the Boston Amateurs made one lasting impact: The detailed box score of their game of September 3, 1895, against the London Consolidated club was used to illustrate scoring notation in the first British textbook of the sport, *Baseball*, written by the leading advocate of the sport, music-hall comedian Richard George Knowles.
4. "One Town Behind: Lawson Is Following His Flying Spouse," *Boston Globe,* 21 September 1895.
5. "Andy Lawson's Scheme," *The Sporting News*, 26 June 1897.
6. "Lawson Recalled by Concord Sporting Men," *Boston Globe*, 5 January 1923.
7. *Boston Globe*, 27 May 1899.
8. "Al Lawson Here Again," *North Adams Transcript*, 28 June 1899.
9. "Why Lawson Stole," *Boston Globe*, 23 January 1902.
10. Lawson's strategy to get publicity with the live burials worked to perfection in Philadelphia. The *Philadelphia Inquirer* ran a series of articles detailing Lawson's hypnotic claims and the reactions of police: Editions from October 21, 22, 24, 25, 26, and 31 and November 1 all ran stories.
11. "Abandoned Sleeper in Coffin," *New York Times*, 8 February 1903.
12. Several years of reports of Lawson's medical quackery culminated in "Lawson Decides to Quit Hartford," an article in the *Hartford Courant*, 2 May 1906.
13. "'Professor' Lawson on Trial Again," *Hartford Courant*, 11 February 1907.
14. *Sporting Life*, 9 March 1907.
15. "And Yet Another Mushroom League in Pennsylvania," *Washington Times*, 7 January 1908.
16. "Wilmington News Notes," *Philadelphia Inquirer*, 28 April 1909.
17. "Boston to Be in New League," *Boston Globe*, 29 December 1909.
18. "Ball Player's Union," *Boston Globe*, 17 March 1910.
19. "Lawson Leaves U S League," *Boston Globe*, 30 March 1910.
20. "Berkeley Trim's Andy Lawson's Veterans," *Pawtucket Evening Times*, 9 June 1919.
21. *Boston Globe*, 16 October 1919.
22. *New York News*, 21 April 1921.
23. *Chicago Defender*, 16 April 1921.
24. Ibid., 28 May 1921.
25. "Baseball Preacher Weds Prayer Bride," *New York Times*, 14 January 1923.
26. "Jersey Klansmen at Odds," *New York Times*, 21 December 1924.
27. "Anti-Klan Speaker Rescued by Police," *New York Times*, 18 June 1925.
28. "Permit is Refused Antiklan Gathering," *Washington Post*, 8 July 1925.
29. "Preacher Lawson Freed," *New York Times*, 26 January 1926.
30. "New Eight Club Ball League," *Chester Times*, 20 December 1926.

Beating the Klan

Baseball Coverage in Wichita Before Integration, 1920–1930

Brian Carroll

Baseball fans planning to attend the game at Island Park in Wichita, Kansas, on June 21, 1925, were advised by the *Wichita Beacon*, the afternoon newspaper, that "strangle holds, razors, horsewhips, and other violent implements of argument" would be barred at the gate.[1] The fear was not of unrest that might somehow be provoked by the near-record heat wave; the warning had to do with race. The all-black Wichita Monrovians, a "fast colored team" just back from a barnstorming tour in Oklahoma, were to play the Ku Klux Klan No. 6 semiprofessional team.[2] To discourage favoritism, the game was to be officiated by two white Catholics, "Irish" Garrety and Dan Dwyer.

Little else is known about what must have been a remarkable baseball game played just months after the Klan had been officially ousted from the state by the Kansas Supreme Court and, a few years earlier, by Kansas governor Henry J. Allen, publisher of the *Beacon*.[3] Despite the unlikely matchup, few remarked on the game, to judge by newspaper coverage at the time, and few, therefore, have remarked on it since.[4] Coverage of it in the morning newspaper, the *Wichita Eagle*, in which it was described as a "novel" game, is typical. Under the headline "Monrovians Beat K. K. K.," a tantalizingly short, two-sentence report in the middle of a sports page devoted to white baseball coverage summarized the action from the day before, a day during which "searing winds" drove the mercury to 102 degrees: "The Wichita Monrovians won from the K. K. K. team in a close and interesting baseball battle at Island Park, Sunday 10 to 8. A good sized crowd watched the colored team win the contest."[5]

Why did the game take place at all? Who initiated or organized the event? What did the teams seek to gain in playing, other than a paycheck? Unfortunately, the newspapers of the day are silent, and the game's participants, whose names are not known, likely all are deceased.[6] That the game occurred at all, however, reveals something of the state of race relations in the mid-1920s in Kansas, a state with, according to one historian, an ambiguous record on race.[7] Examining newspaper coverage—or the absence of it—of racial conditions in the heartland in the 1920s, we can identify something of the social change that eventuated in the introduction of integration in the 1930s, a decade before Jackie Robinson and the Brooklyn Dodgers broke the color barrier in Major League Baseball in 1947 and two decades before the desegregation of public schools was ushered in by *Brown v. (Topeka) Board of Education* in 1954.

To that end, I looked at coverage in the *Eagle* and the *Beacon*, the two dailies in Wichita during the 1920s, as well as in several weeklies, including the *Negro Star* and the *People's Elevator*, the city's two African American papers at the time; the *Klan Kourier* (later the *Kansas Kourier*); and the *Catholic Advance*. Particularly, I looked at press coverage—mainstream and black—of the beginnings of the integration of baseball in Wichita during 1920–30, a momentous period for race relations in the United States. Founded to fight legal race discrimination of all kinds, the NAACP marked its first decade in 1920, while the Urban League, the African Blood Brotherhood, and the Universal Negro Improvement Association all were ascendant.[8] The re-formed Ku Klux Klan, which aimed to enforce race discrimination, to fight Catholicism, Judaism, and immigration, and to make money, was but five years old, struggling for credibility and acceptance in the state and in the region.

The literature on the history of baseball in Wichita and all of Kansas is thin with respect to the contributions of African Americans. Harold Evans in *Baseball in Kansas, 1867–1940* does not mention players of color in any context, for example, while Bob Rives in *Baseball in Wichita* only briefly mentions the Monrovians in its single reference to African Americans in baseball (and does so incorrectly, referring to the team as the Monrovarians).[9] Jason Pendleton in "Jim Crow Strikes Out" does carefully document interracial baseball in the city, and I seek to build on his scholarship by focusing on newspaper coverage.[10]

BASEBALL AND RACE RELATIONS AFTER WORLD WAR I

Having fought for freedom in Europe in a war in which blacks served with distinction both as soldiers abroad and in factories at home, America did little to prevent a hardening of the racial divide on its own soil. During the "Red Summer" of 1919, twenty-five race riots broke out across the nation.[11] Two years later, in Tulsa, Oklahoma, thirty-five black residents were killed in a

twenty-four-hour spree of violence that a grand jury later blamed on "agitation among the negroes of social equality."[12] Walter F. White, secretary of the NAACP, warned that the patience of blacks was running out, that their experience of inequality at war and now at home was taking its toll.[13] In addition, in the early twenties, in the "Great Northern Drive," hundreds of thousands of blacks from the South migrated northward and into the cities to benefit from the industrial boom, leading to a sense of hope and a period of institution building.[14] From 1910 to 1930, 1.5 million blacks, including the publishers of Wichita's *Negro Star*, left the South and headed for Northern cities, many of them passing through the gateway city of Kansas City, just east of Wichita.[15] Kansas actively recruited Southern blacks, allowing land ownership as early as the 1870s.

Baseball during this period was reestablishing itself as the national pastime after the Black Sox Scandal of 1919 had threatened its integrity.[16] Several developments coincided to contribute to baseball's resurgence. Press coverage of the game was expanding; a playground movement, school athletic programs, and park programs were all growing; baseball's moral tone and reputation for civility and sportsmanship were felt to be improved by the increased interest that women were beginning to take in baseball; baseball was celebrated in popular songs and entertainment; and the automobile gave easy access to the ballpark for many people who otherwise would be unlikely to attend a ballgame in the city. Movie houses had been showing World Series films since 1908, while the advent and mass adoption of the telegraph and electric scoreboards enabled fans in America's cities to monitor the progress of games remotely.[17] In Wichita, baseball coverage in the *Eagle*, *Beacon*, and *Star* was robust, indicating the game's importance to black and white communities alike.

Baseball provides a convenient lens through which to examine integration's contexts, because during the first half of the twentieth century the national pastime flourished—together with banking, insurance, gambling, and journalism—as one of the industries in which African Americans found most success during the "bleak decades of racial exclusion."[18] Culturally, the summertime game was an important institution in black communities throughout the country, from the Roaring Twenties through the war-riven 1940s and into the 1950s. The hugely successful Kansas City Monarchs, for example, were described in the *Call*, the city's African American newspaper, as "the life of Kansas City in the Negro vicinity."[19]

BLACK BASEBALL IN WICHITA IN THE 1920s

The game between the Monrovians and the Klan could only highlight the racial divide in Wichita and Kansas at mid-decade. In 1906, ten years after the U.S. Supreme Court decision *Plessy v. Ferguson* ("separate but equal"), Wichita began segregating its schools, a move that the Klan aggressively fought for. The *Eagle* endorsed the plan as best "for the colored race."[20] The black population of 6,500, less than 10 percent of the city's total, was too small to mount a significant resistance. Probably in light of that fact, the *Wichita Searchlight* advised that blacks avoid "ungentlemanly or unladylike" behavior in response to the new Jim Crow law.[21] Housing, too, became increasingly segregated, as shown by a study done by the Wichita Council on Churches in 1924. One out of five blacks, 1,300 in total, lived "far below the level of decency and comfort," according to the report, and many lived in "squatter-towns" that were developing at the city's margins.[22]

The Klan–Monrovians game punctuated a period of transition for black baseball. In 1920 the Negro National, the first black professional league of substance, was launched nearby in Kansas City, Missouri, and was the product of an intimate partnership between team owners and the black press.[23] In the context of what quickly became an economically depressed decade for most Americans but in particular black Americans, the cooperation from and among newspapermen interested to promote financial success and athletic achievement in black baseball was part of a larger effort to establish credibility in the eyes of the mainstream from which the black community was systematically excluded. It was this period of self-help and uplift that made possible the activist reporting and campaigning for the desegregation of baseball in the late 1930s and early 1940s.

Many black communities, including Wichita's, were heeding Booker T. Washington's call for cooperation within and among black businesses "as separate as the fingers, yet one as the hand in all things essential to mutual progress."[24] The *Negro Star*, for example, sounded the theme in its house ads—"We strive to please, to uplift, to advance the race" and "Yours for Racial Uplift and Business Enterprise."[25] The headline to a story about a day of meetings at the black Water Street YMCA in 1922 read, "The Negro Must Help Himself." "If we are to gain and maintain the respect of the white race," wrote the reporter, probably Hollie T. Sims, the *Star*'s owner and publisher, who attended the meetings, "we must prove that the rich, red, potent blood is in our veins and that we are capable of producing and achieving results."[26]

Wichita, Kansas, circa 1926. The local newspapers, including the dailies, the Wichita Beacon *and the* Wichita Eagle, *show a Midwestern city where race relations in sports in the 1920s were progressing on the field and in the stands—a picture in sharp contrast to what prevailed in regions where Jim Crow still prevailed.*

The same week that the Monrovians battled the Klan, the twenty-fourth annual National Baptist Sunday School and Baptist Young People's Union Congress opened in Wichita with a ringing endorsement of Washington's ideas. Atlanta's Rev. Dr. Daniel W. Cannon, a bishop in the black Baptist church, delivered the Congress's keynote address:

> The American Negro must win his way to civilization as other races have done, and then he must learn that civilization is not a garment to be purchased . . . but must be gained thru [sic] industry, honesty, reliability and thrift.[27]

In a front-page story in the *Beacon*, Cannon was quoted as saying that blacks "are here to work."[28]

The convention received several days of front-page coverage in the *Beacon*, probably because of the size of the assembly, which gathered at Wichita's Forum, the city's largest indoor meeting venue.

The Monrovians, too, were a product of the kind of self-help urged on the black community by Cannon, Washington, and the *Star*. The ballclub was owned by the Monrovian Park Association, "one of the first colored corporations in the West" to own and maintain both a team and a ballpark, Monrovian Park, also called Monrovian Amusement Park.[29] In the history of black baseball, it was rare for a team to own and there-

fore control its own playing venue; most clubs had to accommodate their schedule to that of another club whose ballpark they rented.

The Monrovians officially opened their new park on June 3, 1922, with a gala event covered by the *Beacon*, though not the *Star*. Charles Prince Edward, a black "attaché" of Wichita's district court, delivered the opening speech and then stayed to umpire the game. Throughout the decade, Edward appears more often than not as the umpire at games at Monrovia Park. Throwing out the first pitch was S. W. Zickefoose, a white man, chief of Wichita's detectives. "A large number of enthusiastic fans of both races sat in the bleachers" for the game, indicating Wichita's ambiguous attitudes toward race in the 1920s.[30]

Stock in the Monrovian Park Association was valued at $10,000, which was to be used to buy the ballpark at 12th and Mosley. It is not clear whether this transaction was ever made, though the park's name, like the team's, a tribute to the capital of Liberia, suggests that it did. J. M. Booker, president of the corporation, was reported by the *Beacon* to be planning a benefit for a children's home in Wichita—an example of the civic involvement of most black teams of the era. The Monrovians appear sporadically in brief mentions in the *Eagle* and *Beacon* through 1930, when the team and the corporation simply vanish. According to the *Negro Star*, where coverage was also sporadic, the "Southwestern Champions" enjoyed enormous success in 1923, a year after the opening of their ballpark. They went 52–8, a record that included wins against "the best amateur clubs in the country," many of them white.[31]

In 1922, two years after the Negro National's momentous founding in Kansas City, the Monrovians and eight teams in Oklahoma, Nebraska, and Kansas banded together to form the Colored Western League, a segregated counterpart to the white Western League, of which the Wichita Izzies were longtime members. Charles Bettis, an editor with the *Wichita Protest*, a black weekly, served as secretary. Like most black leagues, however, the Colored Western was loosely run. It faced deep logistical and fiscal challenges and could not overcome infighting among its members. With team officials considering a lawsuit against the league

William Simmons (1880–1945), who in 1915 re-formed the Ku Klux Klan, which counted 6,000 members in Wichita in 1922 but would see its influence wane there and nationwide as the decade progressed. The Klan emerged as a campaign issue in Kansas's 1924 gubernatorial race, as publisher William Allen White ran as the "anti-Klan candidate" and the Klan responded with attacks in the Klan Kourier.

director, Jack Johnson of Topeka, the league collapsed after only one season of play and one championship, won by the Monrovians, who finished with the best won–loss record.[32]

In 1925, without league games to fill out their schedule, the Monrovians had to hit the road and, just prior to their game with the Klan, had been touring for six days through western Oklahoma. Barnstorming, the team played six games, losing to Alva, Kiowa, and Decoma and beating Woodward, Waynoka, and Alva.[33] In a brief report in the *Eagle* after the trip, the Monrovians announced they were "open for games with any team in Kansas," an invitation that might have led to the game with the Klan approximately three weeks later.

So little is known about the Klan–Monrovians game in part because the *Negro Star* did not regularly cover sports until 1934. In 1925 it provided no sports coverage at all. The weekly devoted its four or six pages instead mostly to church news and sermons, black achievement, news on resistance to the Klan, and advertising by black businesses. The weekly *Catholic Advance* did not cover sports either. It focused instead on world and national Catholic news, local church news and announcements, and a buyer's guide of Catholic businesses "recommended for your patronage."[34] Nor did the *Klan Kourier* cover sports, devoting its pages mostly to national roundups, meeting reports,

reactions to the rhetoric of various politicians, reactions to daily reporting in the mainstream press, and coverage of Klan chapters and of such issues as immigration and education.[35] The absence of sports reporting in the weeklies should not surprise. Even in the mainstream dailies it was just coming into its own, with the first separate Sunday sports section appearing in the *New York Times* in September 1919.[36]

Still, some important facts are known about the Monrovians–Klan game in 1925. In a report in the *Eagle* a few days afterward, it was described as the "best attended and most interesting game in Wichita" that Sunday, a see-saw battle that began as a pitchers' duel and ended with a blizzard of scoring.[37] We also know that, given "the wide difference of the two organizations," violence was a distinct possibility, as the warning against razors and strangleholds indicates.[38] According to the *People's Elevator*, the record number of lynchings nationally in the first half of 1925, nine, was four more than during the first six months of 1924, the Klan's disavowals of violence notwithstanding.[39] In the *Beacon*'s pregame report, which likely was submitted by the Monrovians' manager, Lascelle Dortch, the "colored boys" were said to have asked that "all their supporters be on hand." The article also noted that "the Klansmen are comparatively new" and that the umpires—Irish Garrety and Dan Dwyer—were selected

because they were "well known amateur umpires" and "to get away from all possible favoritism," a reference to their being Irish Catholic.[40]

It is significant that the game took place at the city-owned Island Park. Built on Ackerman Island in the middle of the Arkansas River in 1911, the wooden ballpark anchored a thirty-four-acre leisure complex that included the Wonderland amusement park and its Giant Thriller rollercoaster built in 1905. Also on the property were a swimming pool, vaudeville theater, dance pavilion and bandstand, roller rink, and a collection of larger-than-life statues acquired from the 1904 World Fair. Ackerman Island was perhaps the most public of Wichita venues for an interracial game; after improvements to the ballpark in 1921, seating capacity was about 5,000.[41]

Island Park, like other city-owned, city-run venues and facilities, including Wichita High School, the city's largest high school in the 1920s, was open to blacks. Segregation occurred at a societal level, but mostly it was not effected by law, as it increasingly was throughout the Deep South.[42] A story in 1924 in the *Star*, for example, offered to "Any Group of Colored Boys" a baseball field at 9th and Mosley, a field owned by the city but run by the black Water Street YMCA two afternoons and two evenings each week.[43] This allowed blacks and whites (and, presumably, the city's Mexican and Syrian populations) to use the park on alternate days.

THE KLAN AND ITS OPPOSITION

The game against the Monrovians came at a critical time for the Klan in Kansas and nationally, which may explain why it occurred at all. The white supremacist organization was fighting for its life. Organized by William Simmons in 1915, the renewed Klan had a great deal of support in the early 1920s, counting 40,000 members in Kansas and approximately 6,000 in Wichita in 1922.[44] In the 1924 gubernatorial race, the Klan's policies became a campaign issue. William Allen White, publisher of the progressive *Emporia Gazette*, ran on a platform that included strong opposition to the Klan, a group he called a "self constituted body of moral idiots." He called himself the "Anti-Klan Candidate for Governor."[45] The Klan fought back. In the October 17 issue of the *Klan Kourier*, the headline for the lead story on the weekly's front page read, "White Appears in Sorry Role in Race for Governor." The story carried the deckhead, "Editor Reckless of Truth." Other front-page stories that week in the *Kourier*: "Kansas Citizen Says White Is Bushwhacker," "Religion Football for Jests of Editor White," "White

Froths in Predicting What He'll Do," and "White Changes Stand Any Time to Make It Fit."

Gathering opposition, including resistance from Catholics, the black press, and politicians such as Allen and White, who were also newspaper publishers, combined to limit the "Protestant American giant," as did postwar society generally, in which stridency in any form seemed somewhat out of place. Robert S. Abbott, founder and publisher of the *Chicago Defender*, the nation's leading black newspaper at the time, called on blacks nationally to "join Catholics, Jews and the Irish in the war against the Klan."[46] Across the country, whites resisted, including, in Wichita, the local police force and veterans of foreign wars.[47]

The *Negro Star* opposed the Klan in a variety of ways. Virtually every week during the 1920s, it included news on the Klan's progress nationwide or on success in curbing its influence and growth. "Watch and pray, yet be ye ever ready," the *Star* warned in May 1922. "The Ku Klux Klan has a more sinister purpose than merely maintaining white supremacy and protecting the virtue of the white skin woman."[48]

Three stories on the "continued outrages" of the Klan dominated the front page of the *Star* a month later, coverage that united "Negroes, Catholics, Jews" in opposition to the "un-American" organization.[49] In July 1926, specifically in opposition to a Klan-backed slate, the *Star* endorsed three judges—of "unquestioned moral standing," it wrote—who were up for election in Wichita.[50]

Neither the *Eagle* nor the *Beacon* actively opposed or supported the Klan. The *Beacon* was more thorough in its reporting on Klan and anti-Klan activities. Coverage of the Klan was in general infrequent. Typically it reflected concern for the organization's reputation for stridency and violence.[51] Also undermining the efforts of the Klan in Kansas was the fact that it was not a homegrown organization, being largely imported from Oklahoma. The Wichita chapter was organized by an Oklahoman using a local hotel room, "room 511, Hotel Broadview," as headquarters.[52] By early 1923, the "koo koos" had organizations in Wichita, Hutchinson, and Arkansas City, and a chapter was forming in Topeka. In 1925, the year of the game, a gathering of 15,000 Klansmen "jammed the fairgrounds here burning crosses and singing. . . . this marked the [Klan's] crescendo in Kansas."[53] As the game was being played that hot summer's day in Wichita, the Klan had already been exposed, in efforts such as Allen's "ouster" suit, as a moneymaking racket.[54]

BASEBALL COVERAGE IN WICHITA'S NEWSPAPERS

These historical and social contexts suggest that for Wichita's Klan chapter, Klan No. 6, the game at Island Park was a rather desperate publicity move. The Klan's No. 6 team in fact does not appear in any other *Beacon* or *Eagle* article or in any posting of league standings in the 1920s, making the few reports of the Monrovians game the only evidence in the press that the team existed. It could have been organized expressly for the one Sunday afternoon in June, an irony against the backdrop of the Klan's much publicized campaign to ban Sunday baseball earlier in the decade. If their purpose in playing a baseball game with the Monrovians was to win public favor, that could help explain why the event was evidently unaccompanied by violence or rowdiness. The see-saw battle, knotted at one apiece through the first five innings, was the most entertaining game in town that Sunday, according to the *Beacon*.[55] The rooting was "enthusiastic," it reported, and the large crowd "would have been a credit to the [white] Western League."[56]

It is not clear whose judgments and opinions the newspaper was reporting, but coverage during the period of black teams in general and of the Kansas City Monarchs in particular suggests that the *Beacon* and the *Eagle* reprinted reports sent in by the black teams themselves, including the Monrovians. The game report carried no byline, which was common for sports coverage of the period, and no individuals in the short article were identified in any context, neither as subjects nor as sources. The report likely was submitted by Lascelle Dortch, the team's manager and a porter at Wichita's Skaer Hotel, exemplifying how in the black communities of the period business leaders invariably played many roles.[57]

That the game was not meaningfully covered by the big dailies can only be explained by race. White teams and leagues got plenty of regular coverage, including previews leading up to big games, reports on the contests themselves, and statistical roundups and league standings.[58] That the dailies would accept and run reports from black teams signals accommodation, however, as does the existence on the *Beacon* staff in 1922 of at least two black reporters, George E. Hamilton and B. C. Ranavalona.[59] (The Reverend Dr. Ranavalona also was the *Star*'s assistant editor throughout the decade.) Even more dramatically, the local dailies ran at least two items on all-black women's teams, including one as early as 1920. In May of that year, in a game at Island Park, the Alabama Bloomers played a Wichita team called the A.B.C. Club.[60] The report appears to have been submitted to the *Beacon* by the Bloomers, indicating a fairly liberal editorial policy on the part of the newspaper.

Why the *Star* did not cover the game is more difficult to understand, though perhaps simple to explain. Until mid-1934, sports coverage in the black weekly was almost entirely reflexive, or passive. The paper solicited and sometimes received reports from teams and clubs in the city's black community, including the Monrovians, the A.B.C.s, the Gray Sox, and many of the city's South Central Athletic Association basketball teams. It appears to have published whatever such reports it received, yielding no comprehensive or systematic coverage of any sport, much less of any one organization. In addition, publisher H. T. Sims was not in Wichita the day of the game. He was at a session of the Baptist Young People's Union (BYPU), an organization for which he was national secretary, in Fort Scott. Given its limited resources, the newspaper may not have been able to send anyone to Island Park to cover the game, particularly on Sunday, the busiest news day of the week for a publication devoted to church news. The *Star* did briefly experiment with sports coverage in 1922 (one issue, 28 July, using Negro Newspaper Association wire copy), but Sims did not begin meaningful sports coverage until the arrival of sports editor Bennie C. Williams in 1934.[61]

Sims's own story parallels that of the community he served. As a young newspaper publisher in Greenwood, Mississippi, and newly married to Virginia, who would help publish the *Star* for thirty-four years, Hollie T. Sims was run out of town for publishing a story in 1919 in tribute to the black soldiers who helped defeat Germany in World War I. Greenwood's sheriff and "a committee of white citizens" told the Simses that "you can't run that kind of stuff in Mississippi," Virginia Sims later remembered. "Cotton can grow at the North Pole easier than the news you're putting out could go in Mississippi," the Simses were told. "We couldn't continue to publish our newspaper and live," wrote Virginia Sims, shortly before her death.[62] In a letter to a fellow member of the NAACP, for which H. T. Sims founded the Wichita chapter, H. T. Sims remembered it this way: "The white man of the South attempted to stop me from praising my people."[63] With two other families who helped publish the newspaper, the Simses loaded up their printing press and boarded a northbound train to Kansas. They published the *Star*, the self-proclaimed "mouth-piece of 28,000 in Kansas" first in June 1919 from a barn behind their home at 1241 Wabash. (The barn and the house are completely gone, leaving only a neglected, overgrown vacant lot in a poor black section of Wichita.)

Booker T. Washington (1856–1915) advocated cooperation within and among black businesses, a message that was well received by members of Wichita's black community. The Wichita Monrovians were owned by the Monrovian Park Association, "one of the first colored corporations in the West" to own and maintain a ballclub and a ballpark at a time when most black ballclubs had to accommodate their schedule to that of another club whose facility they rented.

Hollie T. Sims was the son of R. T. Sims, who published a black church paper in Canton, Mississippi, the *Mississippi Baptist*.[64] H. T. Sims was also a prototypical black newspaperman, serving as an important voice in and for Wichita's black community and involving himself deeply in the community's efforts to lift itself up out of poverty. He founded Wichita's chapter of the NAACP soon after moving to Wichita and served as treasurer of the Water Street YMCA, which was a cultural nexus for Wichita's black community in the 1920s. He also was secretary of the BYPU, which exerted important political influence in its role as a mouthpiece for Baptist blacks and particularly the young.[65] Sims wrote in the *Star* that "a newspaperman's duty is to serve the public by giving the truth of all matters touching the interests of the public regardless of his own individual opinions or creed."[66] Had he been in Wichita the day of the game, he might have covered it himself or at least been on hand. It is also possible he would have ignored the game, recognizing the event as a Klan ploy to curry favor with the public at large and the black community specifically.

Sims clearly lived out Booker T. Washington's philosophy, by employing six people to publish the *Star* and more generally in working to expand business and enterprise in Wichita's black community. In early 1922, for example, he joined with B. H. Neely, his longtime business manager and advertising representative, to organize the Kansas Coal and Mercantile Company.[67] The business partners sold shares in the new company. "We need your and every Race man and woman's $s and co-operation to make this Company a success," they said. To judge from advertisements in the *Star*, which ran over a period of years, the company was indeed a success, but it is not known on what scale.

Neely was a "Race man" himself, organizing, with national backing, Wichita's Local Porters Union in 1924, in addition to working at the *Star* and running the mercantile company.[68] So also was Sims's brother, Hugh N. Sims, who moved with the Sims family to Wichita from Mississippi. Hugh was one of Wichita's two black dentists in 1925, according to a church-council report published by the *Beacon*, a comprehensive study that described "general race relations" as "co-operative" and that discouraged "discrimination against Negro pupils at Wichita High School," an integrated school.[69]

The *Beacon* and *Eagle* each covered the Monrovians as frequently, or as infrequently, as did the *Star*, providing a few lines on a recent game in the city every few weeks or so. Of the three, the *Beacon* provided the most coverage, though for all three papers the short reports were almost certainly submitted by the teams—by Dortch for the Monrovians. The clue is how the teams are described. "The fastest organization of colored players ever organized in Wichita," read one story in the *Eagle* about the Monrovians. According to

another, they were "Wichita's favorite colored ball team," a team that played at a level "that has not been excelled in the history of colored baseball circles in Wichita." The players' names, too, suggest that the teams themselves submitted the copy, names such as "Chicken," "Red Horse," and "Six Shooter."[70]

The dailies likewise included items on the city's other black teams, including the Gray Sox, the A. B. C. Club, Black Wonders, Rex Cudahy, Stockyards, and Coffeyville. These short game reports, *faits divers*, appeared before filler copy at the bottom of the sports page. One report, on the Monrovians' win over Aces Up of Hutchinson, was followed by the filler line, "Dutch painters have always given their women large hands." Another inanely alerted readers that there were 3.5 billion cubic feet of timber in the forests of eastern Poland.[71]

Some of these games were against white clubs, including a game in 1922 at Monrovia Park against the *Eagle*'s own city-league team, the Wichita Eagle Newsies.[72] That year the Monrovians also played the white American Legion team, winning 2 to 1, also at Monrovia Park, and played several games against the *Beacon*'s championship amateur-league team.[73] That white teams would routinely play all-black teams on the black team's home field in the black section of town says a great deal about race relations during the period. This did not occur, for example, in Boston, Chicago, Baltimore, or New York City, nor did it occur anywhere in the South.

THE KANSAS CITY MONARCHS IN THE WICHITA PRESS

One black team stands out for its high profile in the Wichita press, being routinely treated to more than brief mentions in the *Star*, the *Eagle*, and the *Beacon*— the perennial Negro Leagues champion Kansas City Monarchs. As Wichita native and baseball historian Tim Rives points out, no Negro Leagues team "won more pennants, sent more players to the major leagues, or has more members enshrined in the National Baseball Hall of Fame" than the Monarchs.[74] The team barnstormed throughout the Midwest in the 1920s, taking the Negro Leagues brand of baseball and its own brand of comedy to small towns, to black communities in the larger cities, and to white fans everywhere. As did Joe Louis and Jesse Owens for their peers in their respective sports, the Monarchs won for blacks in baseball a measure of credibility and notoriety, as shown by coverage of them in the *Eagle* and the *Beacon*.

For Wichita, the Monarchs also brought night baseball. The team's white owner, J. L. Wilkinson,

developed baseball's first portable lighting system and in the early 1930s barnstormed with it in cities including St. Louis, Dallas, and Wichita, leading up to its debut in the major leagues at Cincinnati's Crosley Field in May 1935.[75] After the debut of night baseball in Enid, Oklahoma, on April 29, 1930, the lighting system came to Wichita, where it required fifty workers to install.[76] Noting the importance of the innovation for baseball, both the *Eagle* and the *Beacon* devoted several days' worth of coverage to the game in Oklahoma. More importantly, the coverage played up the technological progress the lights represented and made little mention of the Monarchs' race or that the game was between black clubs. The *Eagle* story carried the headline "Night Baseball To Get Introduction In Wichita For Two Games," and its lead paragraph read: "Between 7 A.M. and 8:15 P.M. today, Island Park will be transformed into a modern electrical plant . . . so fans in this vicinity can view night baseball for the first time."[77] The next day's paper told Wichitans that "Night Baseball Proves Success At Island" and that playing conditions were "almost as perfect as . . . daylight could give."[78]

There is no trace of prejudice, antagonism, or institutional bias against the Monarchs merely because of their race (though neither is there recognition of the injustices and discrimination that gave birth to the Monarchs and the Negro Leagues in the first place). By contrast, two years later, when the Wichita Izzies, a white team in the Western League, played its first night game, little was made of the event in either of the big dailies.[79] The *Eagle*'s columnist Pete Lightner became a sort of Monarchs advocate, a peculiar posture for a white writer in a mainstream daily in 1930, and he remained a Monarchs booster throughout the decade.[80] He was especially enamored of Satchel Paige, calling him the "greatest colored pitcher in the country and perhaps the greatest pitcher regardless of race."[81]

In the *Negro Star*, the longest baseball story to appear there during the decade, and one of the few to land on page one, was a report on the Monarchs' defeat of the Monrovians in 1923 in a game at Monrovian Park. Charles Prince Edwards umpired, and T. J. "T Baby" Young caught.[82] "Last Tuesday brought the long looked for and noted Kansas City Monarchs before the Wichita Base Ball Fans," the story read, giving the most complete game report published in the *Star* up to that date. It is likely that the performance by Young in this game, catching popular Monrovians pitcher named only as "Farmer," led the Monarchs to sign the 21-year-old Oklahoma native. Thomas Jefferson Young starred for the Monarchs in the late 1920s and 1930s, and for at least one season there his brother

Maurice was a teammate.[83] One of the other few front-page baseball stories to run in the *Star* was about the Monarchs winning the Negro National League pennant in 1923.[84]

Coverage of baseball in Wichita during the 1920s, including coverage of the unlikely matchup of blacks and Klansmen on a hot summer Sunday afternoon, indicated an ambivalence toward race and an acceptance of the segregation that created distinct and separate worlds in Wichita, worlds that rarely intersected. When they did, as on that Sunday at Island Park and whenever the Monarchs came to town, little was made of it and nothing was written about it in the newspapers, which seemed to accept de facto segregation. The big dailies did little to cause readers to see any need for change in that regard. The city's black community, to judge from its two weeklies, was more focused on uplifting itself and on gaining respect from the white community than it was on integration; activism on this front was more than a decade away.

The coverage also shows a Klan on the retreat, struggling to win public favor and finding new and gathering enemies as the decade advanced. It shows Wichita sports opening up to blacks, both on the field and in the stands—a picture of race relations in sharp contrast to those that prevailed in the South, where Jim Crow laws and policies were proliferating. The coverage is a tribute to the black press during the period, which relied on families like the Sims to overcome financial and logistical obstacles each and every week. The *Negro Star*, *Wichita Protest*, and *Wichita Searchlight* provide some of the only records of daily life for the city's black community, which was concentrated along Wichita's Cleveland Avenue, from Third to 21st Streets.[85] They also were more than mere chroniclers of the black experience. As change agents they helped to shape it as well.

In important ways the philosophy of uplift that characterized the 1920s made possible the dramatic progress toward integration in the 1930s. Achievements like those of the Monrovians, the Monarchs, and the black business community in the 1920s provided tools with which to chip away at ignorance of and apathy toward segregation in the 1930s, an arrangement with great costs to black and white populations alike. An examination of coverage in these same newspapers during the 1930s will show how this progress was made and how, as the decade progressed, commentators felt about interracial play in baseball. ■

Notes

1. "Only Baseball Is On Tap At Island Park; Klan and Colored Team To Mix on the Diamond Today," 21 June 1925, A5.

2. Description "fast colored team" from "Monrovans [*sic*] Divide," *Wichita Eagle*, 3 June 1925, 11. Umpires' names from "Only Baseball Is On Tap At Island Park; Klan and Colored Team To Mix on the Diamond Today," *Wichita Beacon*, 21 June 1925, A5.

3. In January 1925, the Klan was "ousted," or outlawed, for operating for profit without a state charter; the Klan appealed to the U.S. Supreme Court, but the appeal was denied ("Klan's End in Kansas Began in 1922," Wichita Beacon, 14 April 1965, no page number). The action was brought by Kansas's attorney general, Richard Hopkins, at the request of Governor Allen, longtime owner and publisher of the *Wichita Beacon*. See also "Report Wichita Alive With Secret Service," *Wichita Eagle*, 25 November 1922, 1. The story carried three deckheads: "Seeking Full Roster of Ku Klux Members," "Many Wichitans Expected to be Listed as Defendants in Ouster Suit," and "5,000 Klansmen in City is Belief." Allen sold the *Beacon* in 1928.

4. The game has not previously been researched. When the game is mentioned in news media, the few sentences the *Beacon* or *Eagle* devoted to the game are simply recapped. For examples, see Paul Gutierrez, "Museum Brings the Negro Leagues to Life," (Ogden, Utah) *Standard-Examiner*, 24 May 2007; Rheta Grimsley Johnson, "Exhibits of Jazz and Negro League Baseball are Must-Sees in Kansas City," *Seattle Post-Intelligencer* 13, January 1999; and Greg Couch, "You're Never Too Old to Learn," *Chicago Sun-Times*, 3 August 2003 (all accessed through America's Newspapers database from NewsBank, 14 November 2007).

5. "Monrovians Beat K. K. K.," *Wichita Eagle*, 22 June 1925, 3. Temperature reading from "Hottest Day," *Wichita Beacon*, 23 June 1925, 1. The 102-degree reading was three degrees off the record for the year and five degrees off the all-time record, according to the newspaper. The *Eagle* also reported a record 4,459 bathers at the city's pool at Central Riverside park ("Municipal Pool Attracted 4,459 Bathers Sunday," *Wichita Eagle*, 22 June 1925, 2).

6. The names of only two players, the manager, and the two umpires are known. On-site research to find the five, or their descendants, did not locate any living participants of the game. The players: Thomas Jefferson "T Baby" Young and Newt Joseph. The manager: Lascelle Dortch. The umpires: W. W. "Irish" Garrety and Dan Dwyer. Both Young and Joseph had good careers with the Kansas City Monarchs, Young as a catcher and Joseph as an infielder, mostly at third base. Joseph also started a taxi service in Kansas City, Paseo Cab Company, later Monarch Cab Company (Larry Lester, "J. L. Wilkinson: 'Only the Stars Come Out at Night,'" in *Satchel Paige and Company*, ed. Leslie Heaphy [Jefferson, N.C.: McFarland, 2007], 124).

7. Craig Miner, *Kansas: The History of the Sunflower State, 1854–2000* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 2002), 253.

8. Gregory Holmes Singleton, "Birth, Rebirth, and the 'New Negro' of the 1920s," *Phylon 43*, no. 1 (1982), 42. For more on the black movements referenced, see Simon P. Fullinwider, *The Mind and Mood of Black America* (Homewood, Ill.: Dorsey Press, 1969).

9. "Baseball in Kansas, 1867–1940," in *Kansas Historical Quarterly* 9, no. 2 (1940), 175–92; *Baseball in Wichita* (Charleston, S.C.: Arcadia, 2004). Rives also incorrectly places the Monrovians–Klan game at "Monrovarian Park." There was no such place.

10. Jason Pendleton, "Jim Crow Strikes Out: Interracial Baseball in Wichita, Kansas, 1920–1935," *Kansas History* 20, no. 2 (summer 1997): 86–101.

11. For more on the riots and the increase in lynchings in 1919, see Anne Hagedom, *Savage Peace: Hope and Fear in America, 1919* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 2007).

12. In David J. Goldberg's *Discontented America* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Press, 1999), 96.

13. Robert Cottrell, *The Best Pitcher in Baseball: The Life of Rube Foster, Negro League Giant* (New York: New York University Press, 2001), 139.

14. The "Great Northern Drive" was a phrase coined by the *Chicago Defender* in March 1917 to publicize migration (24 March 1917). For more on the pattern of movement into Kansas of African Americans, who came mostly from Mississippi, Louisiana, Texas, and Tennessee, see Nell Irvin Painter, *Exodusters: Black Migration to Kansas After Reconstruction* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1976).

15. Two good studies of the exodus from the South are Nicholas Lemann, *The Promised Land: The Great Black Migration and How It Changed America* (New York: Vintage Books, 1992) and Carole Marks, *Farewell, We're Good and Gone: The Great Black Migration* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1989). In September 1923, in a report datelined Kansas City, the *Chicago Defender* gloated that the "Migratory Movement" had cost the state of Georgia more than $2 million in one year, finally tying economic repercussions to the absence of a federal anti-lynching law ("Solid South's Power Doomed by Migration," 1 September 1923, 1).

16. For more on Shoeless Joe Jackson and the Black Sox, see Eliot Asinof, *Eight Men Out* (New York: Henry Holt, 1963).

17. John Betts, *America's Sporting Heritage: 1850–1950* (Reading, Mass.: Addison-Wesley, 1974), 123.

18. Jerry Malloy, ed., *Sol White's History of Colored Base Ball* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1995), 74. Malloy's edition includes a reprinting of the 1907 volume *Sol White's Official Base Ball Guide*, by Sol White, a black ballplayer, successful manager, and, later, a newspaperman.

19. Quoted in *The Kansas City Monarchs, Champions of Black Baseball*, by Janet Bruce (Lawrence: University of Kansas Press, 1985), 3.

20. In Miner, *Kansas*, 255.

21. Ibid., 256.

22. "Wichita Newspapers Attaining Success in Several Lines," *Wichita Beacon*, 18 January 1924, n.p.

23. See Brian Carroll, *When to Stop the Cheering? The Black Press, the Black Community, and the Integration of Professional Baseball* (New York: Routledge, 2007).

24. Booker T. Washington, "Atlanta Compromise Speech," 18 September 1895.

25. Appearing, respectively, in the *Negro Star*, 13 October 1922, p. 5 and p. 4.

26. "The Negro Must Help Himself," *Negro Star*, 29 April 1922, 2. Sims was treasurer of the YMCA and, therefore, was likely present for the meetings. The story carried no byline.

27. "Negroes Must Make a Place for Their Race," *Wichita Beacon*, 25 June 1925, 1. The convention reported 22,000 member churches and nearly 4 million individual members.

28. Wichita–Sedgwick County Historical Museum, photo archives, accessed 10 January 2008. Cannon's message, which *Beacon* readers would likely have found reassuring, also likely contributed to the prominent coverage. In the June 26 issue he is quoted as preaching "love, not hate" ("Teach Negroes Tolerance, Not Hate, Is Urged," *Wichita Beacon*, 11).

29. "Monrovians Get Charter," *Negro Star*, 11 August 1922, 1. The corporation was made up of "several colored men of the community," who were not identified, and led by J. M. Booker, an attorney in Wichita, who served as president.

30. "Colored Western League Opened and Tulsa Lost," *Wichita Beacon*, 4 June 1922, 4A. The Monrovians pummeled the Tulsa Black Oilers 8 to 1 behind the pitching of Hill and the catching of T. J. Young.

31. "Lost Just Eight Out of Sixty," *Negro Star*, 20 July 1923, 1. The team's record is perhaps a bit misleading. The Monrovians would play anyone, including the Arthur Gosset American Legion Post team, the Campbell Bread team, and Kirke Tire Co.

32. "Colored Western League Having Some Bad Trouble," *Wichita Beacon*, 20 July 1922, 4.

33. "Monrovans [sic] Divide," *Wichita Eagle*, 3 June 1925, 11.

34. From the *Catholic Advance*, 23 May 1925, 8.

35. The *Klan Kourier*, which became the *Kansas Kourier* in August 1924, had little local news of any kind. Its contents during the period studied resembled closely that of the Ohio Fiery Cross, the Klan's weekly in Ohio, indicating more of a national agenda and the syndication of content.

36. James Harold Slusser, "The Sports Page in American Life in the Nineteen Twenties" (master's thesis, University of California, 1952), 15.

37. "With the Amateurs," *Wichita Beacon*, 23 June 1925, 2.

38. "Only Baseball Is on Tap at Island Park; Klan and Colored Team to Mix on the Diamond Today," *Wichita Beacon*, 21 June 1925, A5.

39. "Lynching Record for the First Six Months 1925," *People's Elevator*, 3 July 1925, 1. The newspaper relied on figures from the Tuskegee Institute. All of the lynchings were of blacks; none occurred in Kansas.

40. "Only Baseball Is on Tap at Island Park; Klan and Colored Team To Mix on the Diamond Today," *Wichita Beacon*, 21 June 1925, A5. From advertisements in the *Star*, it is known that both W. W. "Irish" Garrety and Dwyer served in World War I, were longtime residents of Sedwick County, claimed to be friends of the black community, and courted the black vote in local elections, Garrety for sheriff and Dwyer for register of deeds (for Garrety, see 21 July 1922, 5; for Dwyer, 27 October 1922, 6). Dwyer was a native of Sedgwick County; Garrety had lived in Sedgwick all but one of his fifty years.

41. Jim Cross, "Mid-river Museum Offered; Proposal Calls for Island in Ark," *Wichita Eagle*, 20 April 1995. Ackerman Island is gone; Exploration Place, a $62-million science center and children's museum, occupies a piece of the land that once was home to the man-made island. The wooden Island Park burned down in 1933; it was replaced the next year by Lawrence Stadium, which, as Lawrence-Dumont Stadium, still serves as the city's minor-league baseball facility ("Local History Spotlight," *Wichita Eagle*, 1 June 2006, E 1). Ray "Hap" Dumont, a former sports editor for the *Hutchinson News*, founded the National Baseball Congress, which annually organized the Kansas State Baseball Tournament ("Baseball Legend Dumont Put Wichita on the Map; Tourney Idea Spurred Stadium," *Wichita Eagle*, 10 June 1993).

42. The 1906 law segregating some of Wichita's public schools is the exception rather than the rule.

43. "Base Ball Field Open to Our Boys," *Negro Star*, 18 July 1924, 1.

44. *Miner*, Kansas, 252.

45. Advertisement, *Negro Star*, 31 October 1924, 6. White spoke to Wichita's black community in four stops on 1 November 1924. "Dont [sic] Fail to hear him tell about the Ku Klux Klan," the ad read.

46. In Goldberg, 134.

47. "Supposed Klan Under Eyes of Kas. Police," *Wichita Beacon*, 5 May 1922, 1; "Kansas G. A. R. Warns Ku Klux by Resolution," *Wichita Beacon*, 18 May 1922, 1.

48. No headline, *Negro Star*, 12 May 1922, 2.

49. "Continued Outrages of K.K.K.," "K.K.K. Draw Small Crowd at Meeting," "Journal Uprise," *Negro Star*, 16 June 1922, 1.

50. "Watch Your Steps for Judges of the Supreme Court," *Negro Star*, 30 July 1926, 1.

51. See "Fifty Thousand Klansmen Gather at Joliet," *Wichita Eagle*, 4 June 1922, 1. The lead story carried an eight-column banner headline and the deckhead "It Gives Worry to Many."

52. "Report Wichita Alive With Secret Service," *Wichita Eagle*, 25 November 1922, 1. The Broadview was Wichita's premier hotel (and, some would argue, still is today).

53. "Klan Once Rode in Kansas," *Wichita Beacon*, 17 April 1965, n.p.

54. Recruiters received four of the eight dollars levied to join the Klan (Goldberg, 57).

55. There were several other games in town that day. The powerful Wichita Advertisers "mauled" the Cudahy Puritans, 12 to 3, in an Open League game at Cudahy Park ("Bye League," *Wichita Beacon*, 23 June 1925, 2); Dold's played Derby Oil at Dold's Park, in an Industrial League doubleheader ("To Play Today," *Wichita Beacon*, 21 June 1925, A5); the Blind Toms, a squad of umpires, played the Wichita Juniors; and Frisco took on the East Side Merchants at the Mosely diamond, where the Monrovians played most of their home games ("Today's Calendar Games," *Wichita Eagle*, 21 June 1925, 15).

56. "With the Amateurs," *Wichita Beacon*, 23 June 1925, 2.

57. Occupation from Polk's Wichita City Directory (Kansas City, Mo., 1925). The Skaer Hotel was a three-story, 56-room hotel built in 1917 by John Henry Skaer and J. W. Skaer, two brothers from Oklahoma (*Wichita Beacon*, 28 March 1943, 5).The hotel was sold in 1957 for $250,000 (*Wichita Eagle*, 5 January 1957, 5A).

58. See, for example, "Leading Teams in City Leagues Take Beatings," *Wichita Beacon*, 21 June 1925, A4. The roundup story documented play in the white leagues, including the Industrial, Bye, Commercial, Municipal, Spalding, Uility, Peerless, and Open leagues, but did not mention black teams or leagues.

59. "Colored Reporter on Big Daily Awarded Gift for Superior Service," *Negro Star*, 2 November 1922, 4. Nothing else is known about Hamilton; and no headline, *Negro Star*, 6 January 1922, 4. Ranavalona had been promoted from "cub reporter to first class reporter by *The Beacon*."

60. "Alabama Bloomers to Play Wichita For Another Game," *Wichita Beacon*, 29 May 1920, 7. Pitching for the Bloomers was to be Miss Havana Seegar, while Liza Grass was slated for center field. The paper published no report on the game's results, however. The other report also appeared in 1920, on the A.B.C. Club beating the Wichita Gray Sox for the "local colored championship" (no headline, *Wichita Beacon*, 20 July 1922, 7). There also appears to have been a men's A. B. C. Club, which in the early 1920s went by the name Black Wonders.

61. Williams was a Wichita city fireman before, during, and after his short stint as *Star* sports editor (Polk's Wichita City Directory).

62. Sims Private Papers, Kansas African American Museum, Wichita, Kansas.

63. In *Dissent in Wichita: The Civil Rights Movement in the Midwest, 1954–1972,* by Gretchen Cassel Eick (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2001), 34. Sims founded the Wichita chapter in 1919, six years after the first Kansas branch, and by 1920 the chapter counted 93 members.

64. R. T. Sims remained in Mississippi, pasturing the First Baptist Church of Moss Point. He resigned that position in February 1922 ("Expression of Regret," *Negro Star*, 17 April 1922, 1). He moved to the Spring Hill Missionary Baptist Church in Tupelo, Miss., in 1924 ("Dr. R. T. Sims," *Negro Star*, 27 February 1925, 1).

65. See "B.Y.P.U. Indorses War Policy," *New York Times*, 17 July 1898, 6.

66. No headline, *Negro Star*, 27 January 1922, 4.

67. "Attention!" *Negro Star*, 17 March 1922, 4.

68. "B. H. Neely Takes Lead for Porters' Union," *Negro Star*, 7 March 1924, 1.

69. "Wichita Newspapers Attaining Success in Several Lines," *Wichita Beacon*, 18 January 1924, no page number. Hugh Sims became Wichita's first black school-board member after winning election in his second try in 1949 (Eick, 30). He later served on the city's advisory council on minority problems in 1957.

70. "Negroes Beat Legion," *Wichita Eagle*, 8 June 1922, 11; "Game Sunday," *Wichita Beacon*, 26 June 1926, 5; "Sunday's Game," *Wichita Eagle*, 23 July 1920, 4. No other names were provided for Chicken and Six Shooter.

71. "Dutch painters" in the 23 June 1922 *Wichita Beacon*, A11; "timber" in *Wichita Beacon*, 1 July 1922, 4.

72. No headline, *Wichita Eagle*, 16 June 1922, 10. It is from this brief report that we learn that the teams played for the gate receipts, the purse.

73. "Negroes Beat Legion," *Wichita Eagle*, 8 June 1922, 11; "Beacon Team to Try and Break Tie at Monrovia," *Wichita Beacon*, 28 July 1922, 8.

74. Tim Rives, "Tom Baird: A Challenge to the Modern Memory of the Kansas City Monarchs," in *Satchel Paige and Company: Essays on the Kansas City Monarchs*, ed. Leslie Heaphy (Jefferson, N.C.: McFarland, 2007), 144.

75. Larry Lester, "J. L. Wilkinson: 'Only the Stars Come Out at Night,'" in *Satchel Paige and Company*, ed. Leslie Heaphy (Jefferson, N.C.: McFarland, 2007), 123.

76. "Night Baseball to Get Introduction In Wichita For Two Games, *Wichita Eagle*, 2 June 1930, 12.

77. Ibid., 12.

78. "Night Baseball Proves Success at Island; Monarchs Winning," *Wichita Eagle*, 3 June 1930, 4.

79. See "Izzies Open Night Baseball Season," *Wichita Beacon*, 17 April 1932, 12A. The Western League Izzies beat Paul Buser Lumber 13 to 1.

80. Pete Lightner, "Just in Sport," *Wichita Eagle*, 3 June 1930, 4; 18 July 1935, 6; 23 July 1935, 6; 24 July 1935, 6. It is interesting to note that, however well the night baseball game in Wichita went, Lightner wrote that he could not foresee lights catching on in football, not "after the newsness wears off," nor could he envision a World Series played at night (3 June 1930, 4).

81. Pete Lightner, "Just In Sport," *Wichita Eagle*, 18 July 1935, 6.

82. "Monarchs Defeat Monrovians," *Negro Star*, 27 April 1923, 1.

83. Appendix D, *Satchel Paige and Company: Essays on the Kansas City Monarchs*, ed. Leslie Heaphy (Jefferson, N.C.: McFarland, 2007), 256.

84. "Negro National League to Meet December 6," *Negro Star*, 30 November 1923, 1.

85. "Wichita Newspapers Attaining Success in Several Lines," *Wichita Beacon*, 18 January 1924, no page number.

Hitting Streaks Don't Obey Your Rules

Evidence That Hitting Streaks Aren't Just By-Products of Random Variation

Trent McCotter

P rofessional athletes naturally experience hot and cold streaks. However, there's been a debate going on for some time now as to whether professional athletes experience streaks more frequently than we would expect given the players' season statistics. This is also known as having "the hot hand."

For example, if a player is a 75 percent free-throw shooter this season and he's made his last 10 free throws in a row, does he still have just a 75 percent chance of making the 11th free throw? The answer from most statisticians would be a resounding *Yes*, but many casual observers believe that the player is more likely to make the 11th attempt because he's been "hot" lately and that his success should continue at a higher rate than expected. Two common explanations for why a player may be "hot" are that his confidence is boosted by his recent success or that his muscle memory is better than usual, producing more consistency in his shot or swing.

AS IT RELATES TO BASEBALL

The question is this: Does a player's performance in one game (a '"trial," if you will) have any predictive power for how he will do in the next game (the next trial)? If a baseball player usually has a 75 percent chance of getting at least one base hit in any given game and he's gotten a hit in 10 straight games, does he still have a 75 percent chance of getting a hit in the 11th game? This is essentially asking, "Are batters' games independent from one another?"

As with the free-throw example, most statisticians will say that the batter in fact does still have a 75 percent chance of getting a hit in the next game, regardless of what he did in the last 10. In fact, this assumption has been the basis for several *Baseball Research Journal* articles in which the authors have attempted to calculate the probabilities of long hitting streaks, usually Joe DiMaggio's major-league record 56-game streak in 1941. It was this assumption about independence that I wanted to test, especially in those rare cases where a player has a long hitting streak (20 consecutive games or more). These are the cases where the players are usually aware that they've got a long streak going.

If it's true that batters who are in the midst of a long hitting streak will tend to be more likely to continue the streak than they normally would (they're on a "hot streak"), then we would expect more 20-game hitting streaks to have *actually* happened than we would *theoretically* expect to have happened. That is, if players realize they've got a long streak going, they may change their behavior (maybe by taking fewer walks or going for more singles as opposed to doubles) to try to extend their streaks; or maybe they really are in an abnormal "hot streak." But how do we determine what the theoretical number of twenty-game hitting streaks should be?

In the standard method, we start by figuring out the odds of a batter going hitless in a particular game, and then we subtract that value from 1; that will yield a player's theoretical probability of getting at least one hit in any given game:

$$1-((1-(AVG))^{\wedge}(AB/G))$$

For a fabricated player named John Dice who hit .300 in 100 games with 400 at-bats, this number would be:

$$1-((1-(.300))^{\wedge}(400/100)) = .7599 = \begin{array}{c}\text{76 percent chance}\\\text{of at least one hit}\\\text{in any given game}\end{array}$$

With the help of Retrosheet's Tom Ruane, I did a study over the 1957–2006 seasons to see how well that formula can predict the number of games in which a player will get a base hit. For example, in the scenario above, we would expect John Dice to get a hit in about 76 of his games; it turns out the formula above is indeed very accurate at predicting a player's *number* of games with at least one hit.

Thus, if games really are independent from one another and don't have predictive power when it comes to long hitting streaks, this means that John Dice's 100-game season can be seen as a series of 100 tosses of a weighted coin that will come up heads 76 percent of the time; long streaks of heads will represent long streaks of getting a hit in each game. This method for calculating the odds of hitting streaks was used by Michael Freiman in his article "56-Game Hitting Streaks Revisited" in *BRJ* 31 (2002), and it was also used by the authors of a 2008 op-ed piece in the *New York Times*:

Think of baseball players' performances at bat as being like coin tosses. Hitting streaks are like runs of many heads in a row. Suppose a hypothetical player named Joe Coin had a 50–50 chance of getting at least one hit per game, and suppose that he played 154 games during the 1941 season. We could learn something about Coin's chances of having a 56-game hitting streak in 1941 by flipping a real coin 154 times, recording the series of heads and tails, and observing what his longest streak of heads happened to be.

Our simulations did something very much like this, except instead of a coin, we used random numbers generated by a computer. Also, instead of assuming that a player has a 50 percent chance of hitting successfully in each game, we used baseball statistics to calculate each player's odds, as determined by his actual batting performance in a given year.

For example, in 1941 Joe DiMaggio had an 81 percent chance of getting at least one hit in each game . . . we simulated a mock version of his 1941 season, using the computer equivalent of a trick coin that comes up heads 81 percent of the time.

—Samuel Arbesman and Steven Strogatz,
New York Times, 30 March 2008

Bill Dahlen's 42-game hitting streak while with the Cubs in 1894 set a record. It remains the fourth-longest and the longest by a right-handed hitter in the National League.

But I wondered whether this method has a fundamental problem as it relates to looking at long hitting streaks, because it uses a player's *overall* season stats to make inferences about what his season must have looked like on a *game-by-game* basis.

Think of the example of flipping a coin. That's about as random as you can get, and we wouldn't really consider the outcome of your last flip to affect the outcome of your next flip. That means that we can rearrange those heads and tails in any random fashion and the only variation in streaks of heads would be due entirely to random chance. *If this were true in the baseball example*, it means that we could randomly rearrange a player's season game log (listing his batting line for each game) and the only variation in the number of long streaks that we would find would be due entirely to random chance.

THE NUMBER-CRUNCHING

To see who's right about this, we need to solve the problem of how to calculate the theoretical number of

hitting streaks we would expect to find. It turns out that the answer actually isn't too complicated. I took the batting lines of all players for 1957 through 2006 and subtracted out the 0-for-0 batting lines, which neither extend nor break a hitting streak. I ended up with about 2 million batting lines.

Then, with the impressive assistance of Dr. Peter Mucha of the Mathematics Department at the University of North Carolina, I took each player's game log for each season of his career and sorted the game-by-game stats in a completely random fashion. So this means that, for instance, I'm still looking at John Dice's .300 average, 100 games, and 400 at-bats—but the order of the games isn't chronological anymore. It's completely random. It's exactly analogous to taking the coin tosses and sorting them randomly over and over to see what long streaks of heads will occur. See the example at the end of this article for a visual version of this.

Dr. Mucha and I ran each random sorting *ten thousand* separate times, so we ended up sorting every player-season from 1957 through 2006 ten thousand separate times to see what streaks occurred. For each of the 10,000 permutations, we counted how many hitting streaks of each length occurred. The difference between this method and the method that has been employed in

the past is that, by using the actual game-by-game stats (sorted randomly for each player), we don't have to make theoretical guesses about how a player's hits are distributed throughout the season. Remember, if players' games were independent from one another, this method of randomly sorting each player's games should—in the long run—yield the same number of hitting streaks of each length that happened in real life.

Here are the results.

TABLE 1.

1957–2006	ACTUALLY HAPPENED	IN THE 10,000 RANDOM SORTINGS	
Length	Number of Hitting Streaks	Standard Average	Deviation
5	22,632	22,584.63	141
6	14,470	14,086.60	112
7	9,151	8,947.64	89
8	6,081	5,766.29	72
9	4,059	3,759.81	59
10	2,645	2,477.50	48
11	1,792	1,647.42	39
12	1,226	1,104.86	32
13	801	747.12	27
14	552	506.85	22
15	415	347.13	19
16	270	238.69	16
17	194	164.97	13
18	129	114.22	11
19	112	79.80	8.9
20	75	55.90	7.5
21	52	39.36	6.2
22	38	27.80	5.3
23	25	19.70	4.4
24	22	13.93	3.7
25	17	10.00	3.2
26	8	7.20	2.7
27	7	5.13	2.3
28	7	3.71	1.9
29	4	2.63	1.6
30	9	1.90	1.4
31	4	1.39	1.2
32	0	1.01	0.99
33	0	0.74	0.86
34	1	0.55	0.74
35+	5	1.48	1.21

TABLE 2.

1957–2006	ACTUALLY HAPPENED	IN THE 10,000 RANDOM SORTINGS	
Length	Number of Hitting Streaks	Standard Average	Deviation
5+	6,4803	62,765.96	150.69
10+	8,410	7,620.99	69.45
15+	1,394	1,137.24	30.71
20+	274	192.43	13.32
25+	62	35.74	5.84
30+	19	7.07	2.60
35+	5	1.48	1.21

It's clear that, for every length of hitting streak of 5-plus games, there have been more streaks in reality than we would expect given players' game-by-game stats. To give those numbers some meaning: There were 19 single-season hitting streaks of 30-plus games from 1957 through 2006. The ten thousand separate, random sortings of the game-by-game stats produced an average of 7.07 such streaks for 1957–2006. That means that almost *three times* as many 30-plus-game hitting streaks have occurred in real life as we would have expected.

Since there were 10,000 trials for our permutation, the numbers here are all highly significant. For instance, the average number of 5-plus-game streaks in the permutations was about 62,766, with a standard deviation of about 151, and there were 64,803 such streaks in real life from 1957 through 2006. This means that the real-life total was 13.5 deviations away from the expected mean, which implies that the odds of getting these numbers simply by chance are about *one in 150 duodecillion* (150 followed by 39 zeros). The number of hitting streaks that have really happened is significantly much higher than we would expect if long hitting streaks could in fact be predicted using the coin-flip model. Additionally, the results of the 10,000 trials converged, which means that the first 5,000 trials had almost the exact same averages and standard deviations as did the second 5,000 trials.

But what does this all mean? What it seems to indicate is that many of the attempts to calculate the probabilities of long hitting streaks are actually underestimating the true odds that such streaks will occur. Additionally, if hits are not IID (independent and identically distributed) events, then it may be extremely difficult to devise a way to calculate probabilities that do produce more accurate numbers.

SO WHY DON'T THE PERMUTATIONS MATCH THE REAL-LIFE NUMBERS?

It's easier to begin by debunking several common-sense explanations as to why the permutations didn't produce a similar number of hitting streaks as happened in real life.

The first one I thought of was the quality of the opposing pitching. If a batter faces a bad pitching staff, he'd naturally be more likely to start or continue a hitting streak, relative to his overall season numbers. But the problem with this explanation is that it's too short-sided; you can't face bad pitching for too long without it noticeably increasing your numbers, plus you can't play twenty games in a row against bad pitching staffs, which is what would be required to put together a long

streak. This same reasoning is why playing at a hitter-friendly stadium doesn't seem to work either, since these effects don't continue for the necessary several weeks in a row. In other words, the explanation must be something that lasts longer than a four-game road trip to Coors Field or getting to face Jose Lima twice in one month.

The second possible explanation—one that I really thought could explain everything—was the weather. That is, it's commonly believed that hitting increases during the warm summer months, which would naturally make long hitting streaks more likely, while the cooler weather at the beginning and the end of the season makes streaks less likely. This would explain why long streaks seem to happen so much more often than we'd expect; the warmest period of the summer can last for months, seemingly making it fertile ground to start a hitting streak. The reason this is important is that hitting streaks are exponential. That is, a player who hits .300 for two months will be *less* likely to have a hitting streak than a player who hits .200 one month and .400 the next; the two players would have the exact same numbers, but hitting streaks tend to highly favor batters who are hitting very well, even if it's just for a short period, and even if it's counterbalanced by a period of poor hitting.

The problem with the weather explanation is that the stats don't bear it out. Of the 274 streaks of 20-plus games from 1957 through 2006, there were just as many that began in May as began in June, July, or August. If it were true that the hottest months spawned hitting streaks, we would see a spike in streaks that began in those months. We don't see that spike at all.

So that eliminates the explanations that would seem to be the most likely. Remember, if all of the assumptions about independence were right, we wouldn't even have these differences between the expected and actual number of streaks in the first place; so it's yet another big surprise that our top explanations for these discrepancies also don't seem to pan out. This leaves me with two other possible explanations, each of which may involve psychology more than mathematics.

In 1941, when Joe DiMaggio extended his hitting streak to 45 games, he tied the record set by Willie Keeler for Baltimore in the National League in 1896–97. Keeler remains in second place on the all-time list but a full 11 games behind DiMaggio.

FIRST EXPLANATION

Maybe the players who have long streaks going will change their approach at the plate and go for fewer walks and more singles to keep their hitting streaks going. This same idea is covered in *The Bill James Goldmine*, where James discusses how pitchers will make an extra effort to reach their 20th victory of a season, which results in there being more 20-game winners in the majors than 19-game winners. There is evidence of this effect, too, as seen by graph 1, which visualizes the chart from earlier.

Notice how the number of streaks around 25 games, and especially around 30 games, spikes up, relative to the general decreasing trend of longer hitting streaks. These streaks are pretty rare, so we're dealing with small samples, but this helps show that hitters may

really be paying attention to their streaks (especially their length), which lends a lot of credibility to the idea that hitters may change their behavior to keep their streaks going.

Also lending some credibility to this explanation is that the spread (the difference between how many streaks really happened and how many we *expected* to happen) seems to increase as the length of the streak increases. That is, there have been about 7 percent more hitting streaks of 10 games than we would expect, but there have been 20 percent more streaks of 15 games, and there have been 80 percent more streaks of 25 games. Perhaps, as a streak gets longer, a batter will become more focused on it, thinking

GRAPH 1. Real Life vs. Random Permutation
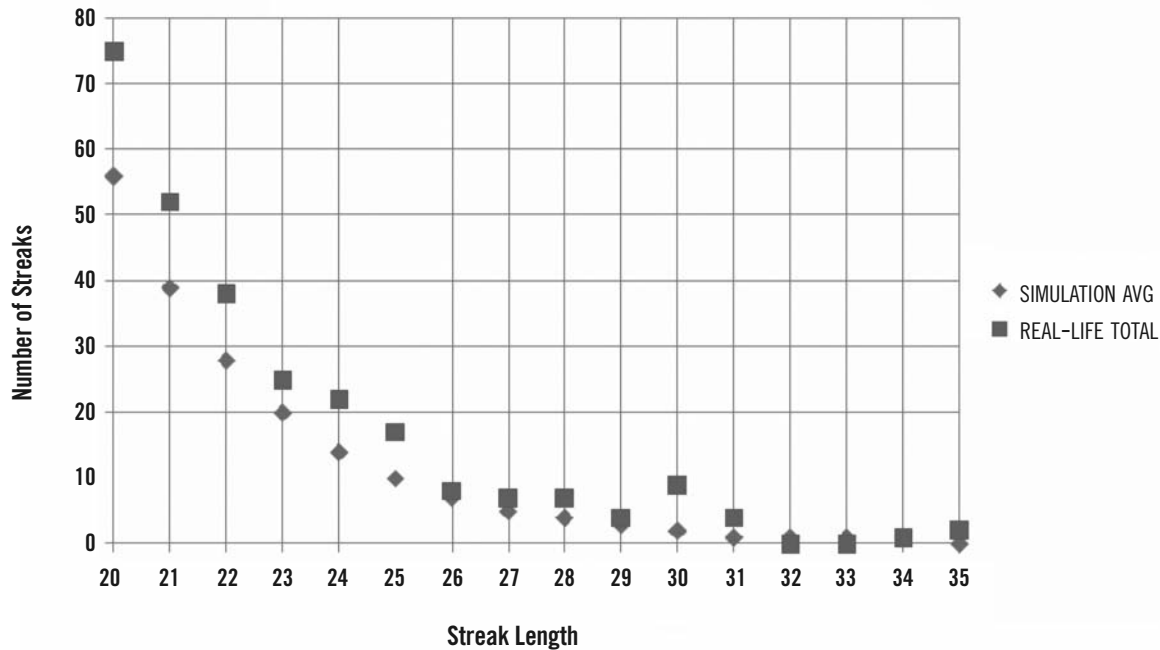
GRAPH 2. Real Life vs. Random Permutation
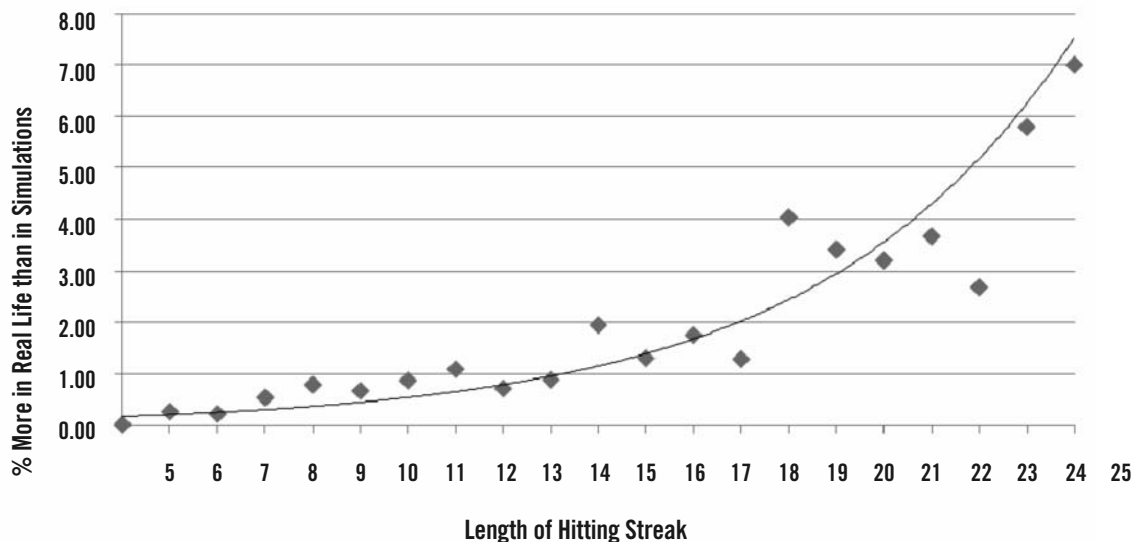
Willie Keeler's career batting was .341, 16 points higher than DiMaggio's, indicating that he experienced more "hot hands" in his 19-year career than just the 45-game hitting streak he put together in 1896–97.

about it during every at-bat, doing anything to keep it going. See graph 2 for a representation of how, as streak length increases, there have been more such streaks in real life than we averaged in the random permutations.

The evidence for this is that 85 percent of the players who had 20-plus-game hitting streaks from 1957 through 2006 had more at-bats per game *during* their hitting streak than they had for their season as a whole. Overall, it worked out to an average 6.9 percent increase in at-bats per game during their streak. That extra 6.9 percent of at-bats per game almost certainly accounts for a portion of the "extra" hitting streaks that have occurred in real life as opposed to our permutations.

This increase in at-bats per game during a streak makes sense, as batters are much less likely to be used as a pinch-hitter or be taken out of a game early when they have a hitting streak going. Additionally, when a player is hitting well, his manager is more likely to keep him in the starting lineup or even move him up in the batting order so that he gets more plate appearances. There may also be a self-fulfilling prophecy here; as a player starts hitting well, his team will tend to score more runs, which will give the batter more plate appearances. So hitting well lends itself to getting more chances to extend a hitting streak. Also, pitchers may be hesitant to walk batters (and batters hesitant to take walks) because the players want the streak to end "legitimately," with the batter being given several opportunities to extend the streak.

The extra at-bats per game also account for the slope of graph 2, which shows an exponential trend in the number of "extra" hitting streaks that have occurred in real life as opposed to permutations. As streak length increases, those extra at-bats make streaks increasingly more likely. For instance, if we take a .350 hitter who plays 150 games and increase his at-bats per game from 4.0 to 4.28 (about a 6.9 percent increase) for an *entire season*, his odds of a 20-game hitting streak increase by 34 percent, but his odds of a 30-game streak increase by 81 percent, and his odds of a 56-game streak increase by an amazing 244 percent. Keep in mind that those increases are larger than we would see in our hitting-streak data because the 6.9 percent increase in at-bats per game applies only to the 20 or so games during the hitting streak—*not the entire 150 games that a batter plays during a season*. It is difficult to determine how many more streaks we would see if hitters' at-bats were allowed to increase by 6.9 percent for only selected stretches of their season.

SECOND EXPLANATION

Something else is going on that is significantly increasing the chances of long streaks, including possibly the idea that hitters do experience a hot-hand effect where they become more likely to have a hitting streak because they are in a period in which they continually hit better than their overall numbers suggest. This hot streak may happen at almost any point during a season, so we don't see a spike in streaks during certain parts of the year.

At first glance, the results of a hot hand would appear very similar to the hot-weather effect: If you've been hitting well lately, it's likely to continue, and if
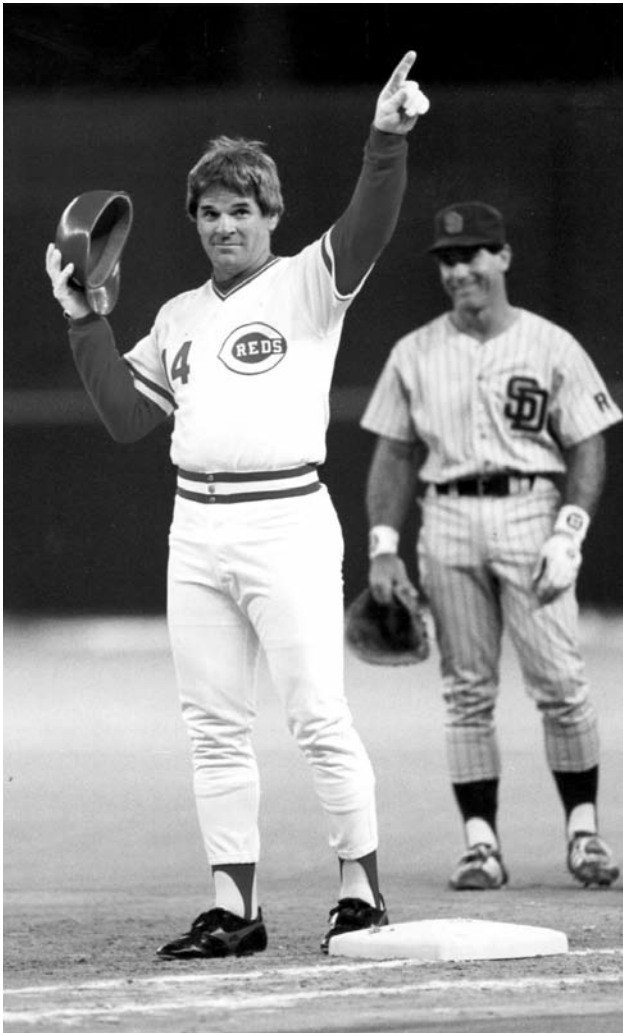
Pete Rose's 44-game hitting streak for the Reds in 1978 remains the record in the National League in the modern era and the third-longest in history. In the 37 years since DiMaggio set the record, the closest anyone else had come to touching it was the 37-game streak by Tommy Holmes of the Braves in 1945.

you haven't been hitting well lately, that's likely to continue as well. The difference is this: If it's the weather that's the lurking variable, then you continue hitting well because you naturally hit better during this time of year. If it's a hot-hand effect, then you continue hitting well because you're on a true hot streak. But we have seemingly shown that the weather doesn't have an effect on hitting streaks, thereby providing some credibility for the hot-hand idea.

We expect a player to have a certain amount of hot and cold streaks during any season, but the hot-hand effect says that the player will have hotter hots and cooler colds than we'd expect. So the player's overall totals still balance out, but his performance is more volatile than we would expect using the standard coin-flip model.

There may be some additional evidence for this. Over the period 1957–2006, there were about 7 percent more 3- and 4-hit games in real life than we would expect given the coin-flip model but also about 7 percent more *hitless* games. Over a course of 50 years, those percentages really add up. What this means is that the overall numbers still balance out over the course of a season, but we're getting more "hot games" than we would expect, which is being balanced by more "cold games" than we would expect.

Additionally, there is evidence that tends to favor the hot-hand approach over the varying-at-bat approach. Dr. Mucha and I ran a second permutation of 10,000 trials that was the same as the first permutation—except we eliminated all the games where the batter did not start the game. In our first permutation, we implicitly assumed that non-starts are randomly sprinkled throughout the season. But that is likely not the case. Batters will tend to have their non-starts clustered together, usually when they return from an injury and are used as a pinch-hitter, when they have lost playing time and are used as a defensive replacement, or when they are used sparingly as the season draws to a close.

We expected that this second permutation would contain more streaks than the first permutation, as we essentially eliminated a lot of low-at-bat games, which are much more likely to end a hitting streak prematurely. The question was whether this second permutation would contain roughly the same number of streaks as occurred in *real life*.

The outcome actually comported very well with our expectations. In general, there were more streaks in this second permutation than in the first permutation—but still fewer streaks than there were in real life. For instance, in real life for 1957–2006, there were 274 streaks of 20 or more games; the first permutation (including non-starts) had an average of a mere 192 such streaks; and the second permutation (leaving out non-starts) had an average of 259 such streaks. The difference between 259 and 274 may not sound like much, but it is still very significant when viewed over 10,000 permutations, especially since we still aren't quite comparing apples to apples. There undoubtedly will be streaks that fall just short of 20 games when looking only at starts but that would go to 20 or more games when non-starts (e.g., successful pinch-hitting appearances) are included.

As the streak length increases, the difference between real life and the two permutations widens even further. For streaks of 30 or more games, there were 19 in real life, with an average of only 10 in our second

permutation when we look only at starts. In this paper I deal primarily with long streaks, but I will point out that, for streaks less than 15 games, the pattern does not hold; there were fewer short streaks in real life than in the second permutation when we look only at starts.

The reason this favors the hot-hand effect is this: Our first explanation above relies on the idea that players are getting significantly more at-bats per game during their hitting streak than during the season as a whole. But the reason for a large part of that difference is that players are not frequently used as non-starters (e.g., pinch-hitters) during their streak, so it artificially inflates the number of at-bats per game that the batters get during their streaks relative to their season as a whole. Pinch-hitting appearances have little effect on real-life hitting streaks because managers are hesitant to use a batter solely as a pinch-hitter if he is hitting well. So we should be able to remove the pinch-hitting appearances from our permutations and get results that closely mirror real life. But when we do that, we still get the result that there have been significantly more hitting streaks in real life than there "should have been." This tends to add some weight to the hot-hand effect, since it just does not match up with what we would expect if the varying number of at-bats per game were the true cause.

Besides the hot-hand effect, other conditions that may be immeasurable could be playing a part. For instance, scorers may be more generous to hitters who have a long streak going, hating to see a streak broken because of a borderline call on a play that could reasonably have been ruled a base hit.

CONCLUSION

If you take away only one thing from this article, it should be this: This study seems to provide some strong evidence that players' games are not independent, identically distributed trials, as statisticians have assumed all these years, and it may even provide evidence that things like hot hands are a part of baseball streaks. It will likely take even more study to determine whether it's hot hands, or the change in behavior driven by the incentive to keep a streak going, or some other cause that really explains why batters put together more hitting streaks than they should have, given their actual game-by-game stats. Given the results, it's highly likely that the explanation is some combination of all of these factors.

The idea that hitting streaks really could be the by-product of having the hot hand is intriguing. It will tend to chafe statisticians, who rely on that key

assumption of independent, identically distributed trials in order to calculate probabilities. When we remove the non-starts that could have thrown a wrench into our first permutations—*but we still get the same results*—then it really does lend some evidence for the possibility that what has happened in real life just does not match what a "random walk" would look like.

From the overwhelming evidence of the permutations, it appears that, when the same math formulas used for coin tosses are used for hitting streaks, the probabilities they yield are incorrect; those formulas incorrectly assume that the games in which a batter gets a hit are distributed randomly throughout his season. This also means that maybe all those baseball purists have had it at least partially right all this time; maybe batters really do experience periods where their hitting is above and beyond what would be statistically expected given their usual performance.

In his review of Michael Seidel's book *Streak*, Harvard biologist Stephen Jay Gould wrote:

> Everybody knows about hot hands. The only problem is that no such phenomenon exists. The Stanford psychologist Amos Tversky studied every basket made by the Philadelphia 76ers for more than a season. He found, first of all, that probabilities of making a second basket did not rise following a successful shot. Moreover, the number of "runs," or baskets in succession, was no greater than what a standard random, or coin-tossing, model would predict.

Gould's point is that hitting streaks are analogous to the runs of baskets by the 76ers in that neither should show any signs of deviating from a random coin-tossing model. I hate to disagree with a Harvard man, but my study of long hitting streaks for 1957 through 2006 seems to show that the actual number of long hitting streaks are in fact *not* the same as what a coin-tossing model would produce, even when we try to account for the fact that players get varying numbers of at-bats per game. By using the coin-flip model all of these years, we have been underestimating the likelihood that a player will put together a 20-, 30-, or even a magical 56-game hitting streak.

But this study doesn't just look at the statistics side of baseball. It also reveals the psychology of it. This study shows that sometimes batters really may have a hot hand, or at least that they adapt their approach to try to keep a long hitting streak going—and baseball players are nothing if not adapters.

COIN-FLIP EXAMPLE

I flipped a coin ten times and wrote down the result. I then had my computer give me a random number that is somewhere between 0 and 1, and I assigned that number to each coin flip:

TABLE 3.

Flip Number	Result	Random Number
1	heads	0.975
2	tails	0.823
3	tails	0.434
4	heads	0.191
5	heads	0.652
6	tails	0.239
7	heads	0.303
8	heads	0.009
9	tails	0.917
10	heads	0.541

We can consider the table 3 to be like John Dice's batting log. Each game with a "heads" is a game where he got a hit. Each game with a "tails" is one in which he went hitless. The longest streak of heads was two in a row.

Now, I take those results above and sort them by that random number instead:

TABLE 4.

Flip Number	Result	Random Number
8	heads	0.009
4	heads	0.191
6	tails	0.239
7	heads	0.303
3	tails	0.434
10	heads	0.541
5	heads	0.652
2	tails	0.823
9	tails	0.917
1	heads	0.975

It's still the same outcome as before, except that they've just been reordered completely randomly. Our longest streak of heads here is two in a row, as well. It just so happens that we end up with the same longest streak of heads in this random sorting as we did in the original tossing. But now that the results are sorted randomly, any variation in the streaks we find will be due completely to chance.

For coin tosses, we expect to find about the same number of long streaks from one trial to the next. And if hitters' results were like coin tosses, we would expect to find about the same number of long hitting streaks from one trial to the next. But my results show that the original order of baseball games (analogous to the first table of coin flips) is significantly more likely to contain long hitting streaks than the random order of baseball games (analogous to the second table of coin flips). ■

Clutch Hitting and the Cramer Test

Phil Birnbaum

Bill James recently asserted that Dick Cramer's famous 1977 clutch-hitting study, which purportedly demonstrated that clutch talent is a myth, was fatally flawed. James argued that the study's finding that year-to-year clutch hitting looks random was not enough to show nonexistence. Here, the author uses statistical methods to try to determine whether James's argument is indeed correct.

I n *The Baseball Research Journal* in 1977, Dick Cramer published a now classic study on clutch hitting. He looked at the best clutch hitters in 1969 and found that, on average, they reverted to normal in 1970. Cramer concluded that, since the 1970 performances looked random, the lack of persistency showed that the 1969 performance was simply random luck and, therefore, that clutch hitting as an ability does not exist.

Twenty-seven years later, in the same publication, Bill James disputed Cramer's conclusion. In his essay "Underestimating the Fog" (critiqued by Jim Albert in *By the Numbers* 15, no. 1, February 2005), James wrote that

> random data proves nothing—and it *cannot* be used as proof of nothingness. Why? Because whenever you do a study, if your study completely fails, you will get random data. Therefore, when you get random data, *all* you may conclude is that your study has failed. [emphasis in original]

This is certainly false. It is true that, when you get random data, it is *possible* that "your study has failed." But it is surely possible, by examining your method, to show that the study was indeed well designed and that the random data does indeed reasonably suggest a finding of no effect.

But you have to look at the specifics of the study. For some studies, you'll find that the study has indeed "failed"—that, even if a substantial effect existed, the study would still have found random data. But, contrary to Bill James's assertion, many studies will indeed be powerful enough to find a relationship if one exists—and, for those, a finding of random data is powerful evidence of a noneffect.[1]

THE CRAMER TEST

Cramer's study took 122 players who had substantial playing time in both 1969 and 1970. He ran a regression on their 1969 clutch performance versus their 1970 performance. Finding a low correlation, he concluded that clutch performance did not repeat and that clutch ability was not shown to exist.

James disputes this result, writing that "it is simply not possible to detect consistency in clutch hitting by the use of this method." Is this correct? If clutch hitting were a consistent skill, would the Cramer test have been powerful enough to pick it up?

To check, I repeated a variation of Cramer's study for the 1974 and 1975 seasons. For each of the 137 players having at least 50 "clutch" at-bats both years,[2] I calculated, for both years, the difference between his batting average in clutch situations and his batting average in non-clutch situations. I then ran a linear regression on the 1974 versus 1975 data.

The results: a correlation coefficient (r) of .0155, for an r-squared of .0002. These are very low numbers; the probability of the f-statistic (that is, the significance level) was .86. Put another way, that's a 14 percent significance level—far from the 95 percent we usually want in order to conclude there's an effect.

So this study reaches the same preliminary conclusions as Cramer's—players with good (or poor) clutch hitting in 1974 showed no tendency to repeat in 1975. Standard statistical operating procedure would have us conclude that there's no evidence of a clutch effect.

But does this constitute good evidence that clutch hitting does not exist? We can't answer that question yet. It could be that the study simply isn't strong enough to find such an effect if it exists. If that's the case, then, as James suggested, we'd get random data whether an effect existed or not, and the study could be said to be a failure.

But not a complete failure. What the study *does* clearly tell us is the relationship between a player's 1974 performance and his 1975 performance. It tells us that relationship is very weak.

We may not be able to say for sure, yet, that the statement "clutch-hitting talent exists" is false. But the statement "Because Wade Boggs hit 110 points better

in the clutch in 1989, he must be a good clutch hitter" is definitely false, because we have shown that, even if clutch hitting exists, there is no season-to-season consistency.

Specifically, the correlation coefficient of .0155 tells us that, if a player were X standard deviations above average in 1974, he would be expected to be only 1.55 percent of X standard deviations above average in 1975. Roughly speaking, a player who was 110 points above average in 1974 would be *about 2 points above average* in 1975.

Yes, this study has not necessarily proven that clutch hitting doesn't exist. But it *does* show that, if clutch hitting *did* exist in 1974–75, it was in very, very small quantities.

OTHER YEARS

I repeated this study for all pairs of years from 1974 through 1990 (excluding pairs involving 1981). See table 1, below.

TABLE 1.
Clutch-Hitting Correlation Between Pairs of Consecutive Seasons

Season	r	r-squared	P(f statistic)
1974–75	.0155	.0002	.86
1975–76	.0740	.0055	.37
1976–77	.0712	.0051	.40
1977–78	.0629	.0040	.44
1978–79	.1840	.0339	.02
1979–80	.0038	.0000	.96
1982–83	.0250	.0006	.75
1983–84	.0456	.0021	.60
1984–85	.0222	.0005	.79
1985–86	.0728	.0053	.38
1986–87	.0189	.0004	.82
1987–88	.0034	.0000	.97
1988–89	.0829	.0069	.33
1989–90	.0373	.0014	.67

The results are pretty consistent: None of the pairs shows anything close to statistical significance, except one—1978–79. But that one shows a *negative* correlation; players who hit well in the clutch in 1978 hit *poorly* in the clutch in 1979. Since we have no reason to believe that clutch hitting one year turns you into a choker the next, that season is probably just random noise.

I have no explanation for why 1979–80 is so highly negative, or for why the correlation is positive in 12 of the 14 years. In any case, we do have confirmation of Cramer's findings in all 14 of those seasons—in none of them did clutch performance this year significantly lead to clutch performance next year.

We still have not shown whether clutch perform-ance exists or not. But we have shown that, for each of the 14 seasons in the study, a good clutch perform-ance over a season's worth of at-bats does *not* reliably indicate a good clutch hitter.[3]

POWER OF THE SINGLE-YEAR CRAMER TEST

Back to the question—if clutch hitting *did* exist, would this study have been able to find it? James seemed to imply that the question could not be answered, and we therefore must assume the answer is no. But we *can* answer it.

Let's suppose a clutch-hitting ability existed and that the ability was normally distributed with a stan-dard deviation (SD) of .030 (that is, 30 points of batting average).

Statistically, that would mean that, of the 137 players,

- 47 players, or about 34 percent, would be clutch hitters of 0–30 points;
- 47 players, or about 34 percent, would be choke hitters of 0–30 points;
- 19 players, or about 14 percent, would be clutch hitters of 30–60 points;
- 19 players, or about 14 percent, would be choke hitters of 30–60 points;
- 3 players, or about 2 percent, would be clutch hitters of 60–75 points;
- 3 players, or about 2 percent, would be choke hitters of 60–75 points;
- One-half player would be a clutch hitter of 75 points or more;
- One-half player would be a choke hitter of 75 points or more.

(This adds up to 139, instead of 137, because of round-ing.)

If that were the case, we would probably agree that clutch hitting is a reasonably important part of the game. But, still, two-thirds of all players are only 30 points different in the clutch, and only one regular player in the league has a 75-point difference (and it might go either way).

We would probably say that clutch hitting is reasonably significant—something for the player's manager to keep in mind, along the lines of a platoon differential, for instance.

So, back to the original question: Would the Cramer test be able to pick up this distribution of clutch talent?

To check, I took the 137 players in the 1974–75 sample and assigned each of them a "clutch talent" based on this normal distribution.[4] Then, I threw away

their real-life "hits" columns and simulated their actual number of clutch and non-clutch hits based on their clutch and non-clutch expected averages.

I repeated this test 14 times, for easy comparison to the 14 years of data shown in table 1.

The results: In 11 of the 14 cases, the Cramer test had absolutely no trouble picking up the clutch hitting at the significance level of .05:

R	r-squared	P(f statistic)
.2385	.056	.005
.1872	.035	.03
.3589	.128	.00
.2196	.048	.01
.0889	.007	.30
.0646	.004	.45
.3006	.09	.0004
.3928	.15	.00
.2945	.086	.0005
.2711	.073	.0014
.1425	.02	.10
.1826	.033	.03
.3321	.11	.0001
.2715	.073	.0013

To make things clearer, here are the probabilities (third column of the table) summarized in table form. The top row is for the real-life data (from table 1); the bottom row is for our simulation (table above). Statistically significant samples (.05 or lower) are in bold, and "Neg" indicates a negative correlation:

.86 .37 .40 .44 Neg .96 Neg .60 .79 .38 .82 .97 .33 .67
.01 **.03** **.00** **.01** .30 .45 **.00** **.00** **.00** **.00** .10 **.03** **.00** **.00**

There is no question that the results in the second row are highly significant and that the results in the first row are largely random. For a clutch SD of 30 points, the Cramer test finds the clutch hitting. Since it did not, we can be almost certain that, if clutch hitting talent does exist, its standard deviation must be less than 30 points.

Let's repeat the experiment, but this time with an SD of 20 points and 28 simulated seasons instead of 14. I will leave out the full results and go right to the table of significance levels:

.86 .37 .40 .44 Neg .96 Neg .60 .79 .38 .82 .97 .33 .67
.41 **.04** Neg **.00** .26 .10 **.00** **.00** **.03** **.047** .41 .11 **.00** .54
.02 Neg .33 **.00** .46 .15 **.02** .19 **.02** .16 **.03** .41 .47 .55

Overall, 12 of the 28 simulated runs found statistical significance, while many of the others were low, .2 or less. Again, there's no comparison between the real-

life data and the simulation, and we can again conclude that, if clutch hitting existed at the 20-point SD level, the Cramer test would have found it.

So, let's now try an SD of 15 points, or .015. This is half of what we started with, which would mean that only one player in both leagues would be as much as 45 points better (or worse) in the clutch.

Since the significance levels will start to vary more, I'll run more of them. Here are four rows of simulated data, again with the real-life data in the top row:

.86 .37 .40 .44 Neg .96 Neg .60 .79 .38 .82 .97 .33 .67
.18 **.02** .08 .91 .14 .11 **.04** **.03** Neg Neg **.01** .41 .22 .41
Neg Neg .25 Neg .57 **.03** .21 .18 .53 .12 **.046** Neg .75 .17
.09 .09 **.01** .09 .27 .82 .69 **.03** .26 .74 .90 Neg **.008** **.02**
.98 .18 Neg Neg Neg .76 .38 Neg .67 .46 .12 .13 **.002** Neg

We're down to only 11 significant simulations out of 56. But there are still a few close calls and the numbers lean toward the smaller, which suggests that the test is picking up a real effect. Still, the test seems to have gotten significantly weaker.

Let's go down another step, to .010:

.86 .37 .40 .44 Neg .96 Neg .60 .79 .38 .82 .97 .33 .67
.10 .08 .09 .42 .10 .35 Neg .44 .37 .65 Neg Neg .21 Neg
.81 .52 .99 .87 **.02** .14 0.26 .35 Neg Neg Neg Neg .29 .90
.80 .75 .27 .09 Neg .68 Neg .10 **.001** .61 Neg Neg Neg **.02**
.08 Neg .70 **.04** .78 .26 .52 .34 Neg **.002** .31 .60 .95 Neg

There are five significant findings out of 56—about 9 percent, whereas 2.5 percent would be expected by chance—but the numbers are getting bigger. The real-life row of data still doesn't quite fit in, but it's getting pretty close. We certainly can't say that an SD of .010 is out of the question, but, still, it does look a bit doubtful.

To make sure, we'll go down one more step, to .0075:

.86 .37 .40 .44 Neg .96 Neg .60 .79 .38 .82 .97 .33 .67
.35 .19 .99 Neg .62 .99 Neg .10 **.01** **.006** .60 Neg .41 .38
Neg Neg Neg Neg Neg .59 Neg .44 .68 Neg Neg .66 .52 .34
Neg .22 .71 Neg Neg .77 Neg .51 .71 .36 .27 Neg Neg .34
.06 .79 Neg .61 .68 Neg Neg .46 .48 .20 .88 Neg Neg .95

Although there are still a couple of significant results, our row of real-life data fits right in among the other rows. It's fair to say that the Cramer test does indeed "fail" when the standard deviation of clutch hitting is as low as .0075.

A FORMAL STATISTICAL-POWER TEST

Instead of using the simulation, we can produce an actual measurement of the power of the Cramer test by using a freeware software tool called GPOWER.[5]

Suppose clutch hitting existed but with a real-life correlation of .25. That would mean that, roughly speaking, a player who hit 110 points above average in the clutch this year would hit about 27 points higher in the clutch next year. What are the chances the 1974–75 Cramer test would find a statistically significant result? GPOWER's answer: 91.3 percent. That means, on average, we should have found 13 significant real-life seasons out of the 14. We actually found zero.

With a correlation of .2, the Cramer test would succeed 77 percent of the time—11 out of 14 instead of zero. At r = .15, we would find significance 55 percent of the time—6 out of 14. At .1, the success rate is still 32 percent, or 4 out of 14. Finally, at .05, the Cramer test would succeed only 14 percent of the time, which is still 2 out of 14.

It's fair to say that, at the most optimistic, season-to-season clutch hitting might exist with a correlation of .1 or less. That means that a player with 110 points of clutch hitting this year would show only 11 points next year. And, again, that's being the most optimistic.

THE MULTIYEAR CRAMER TEST

If we take all 14 years of the Cramer test and put them in one large regression, that would save us having to look at 14 different regressions. It might also find a real effect where it couldn't before, since 14 seemingly random results often combine to give a very significant one. For instance, when a player goes 2 for 5, he might just be an average player having a good day; but when he goes 2 for 5 over a whole season, he's Ted Williams.

In the 14 seasons in the study, there were a total of 2,057 season-to-season comparisons. Running a regression on those seasons gives:

	r	r-squared	P(f statistic)
14 seasons	.0142	.0002	.52

This is, decidedly, an insignificant result. If clutch hitting were truly and completely random, on average we would get a significance level of .50—and we got .52, which is very close. This is far from the .05 we would want to see to conclude that clutch hitting is real.

What about the simulation? Let's start with a standard deviation of 15 points, where the one-season Cramer test was successful only about 20 percent of the time. I ran 15 copies of each 1974 player, for a total of 2,055 player-seasons:

	r	r-squared	P(f statistic)
14 simulated seasons	.0529	.002	.02

The simulation turns out significant at the 2 percent level. But it could be a fluke—let's run it a few more times, and compare it to the real-life .52 (not shaded):

.52	**.02**	**.004**	**.005**	**.003**	.06	**.00**	**.003**	**.005**	**.01**
.12	**.03**	**.007**	**.02**	**.01**	.12	**.00**	**.01**	**.01**	**.01**

The 14-seasons-combined Cramer test seems to find clutch hitting at a standard deviation of .015 almost all the time. And, in fact, our .52 "real-life" significance level is very much out of place in this list.

Let's try .010:

.52	.82	.11	.60	.49	**.002**	.27	.65	.10	.30
.32	.26	.14	.18	**.01**	.24	.07	.08	**.005**	.11

Three of the 19 simulations came up with significant results; several others were very close; and most of the numbers are low. However, there are a few higher numbers, and the real-life .52 isn't completely out of place here. We can say, then, that the 14-season-combined Cramer test begins to "fail" at a standard deviation of about 10 points.

GPOWER AGAIN

Running our complete 14-season study (2,055 pairs) through GPOWER shows:

- If there were a correlation of .15 or higher, the 14-season Cramer test would have found it 100 percent of the time (or at least more often than 99.9995 percent).
- If the correlation were .10 or higher, we would have found it 99.8 percent of the time.
- If the correlation were .08 or higher, we would have found it 97.7 percent of the time.
- If the correlation were .05 or higher, we would have found it 73 percent of the time.
- Finally, if the correlation were .05, what are the chances we would find a significance level of .52 or better? *99 percent*. That is, if there were indeed clutch hitting at a 5 percent correlation—which means 110 points this season translates into only 5.5 points the next—99 times out of 100 we would have seen results more significant than we did.

CONCLUSIONS

We can draw two sets of conclusions from all this—one set about the Cramer test, and one set about clutch hitting.

The Cramer test provides important evidence on the clutch-hitting question. While it cannot completely disprove the existence of clutch hitting, it puts a strong lower bound on the magnitude of the possible effect.

If clutch-hitting talent is distributed among players with a standard deviation of at least .030, the single-season Cramer test (with 137 player-pairs) is sufficiently powerful to find the effect. Between .020 and .010, the single-season test might find the effect, but it probably will not. Below .010, the single-season test will not find the effect.

Using the Cramer test 14 separate times on 14 separate seasons, we should note an obviously above-average number of significant seasons down to an SD of 0.015. At .010, we will notice more significant seasons than expected, perhaps 9 percent instead of 2.5 percent. But at .0075, the Cramer test will almost certainly fail to find the effect.

By using the Cramer test on one large sample of 14 seasons combined, we are almost certain to notice an effect all the way down to an SD of .015. But at .010, a finding of significance is unlikely.

Finally, if the correlation of the large sample is .08 or higher, the Cramer test on the combined data should spot the correlation almost 98 percent of the time.

As for clutch hitting itself:

- The Cramer tests show that clutch hitting appears to not exist at all. The question, though, is whether clutch hitting is still *possible* given the limitations of the Cramer test.

- If clutch hitting exists despite the Cramer test's failing to find it, its standard deviation among players is almost certainly less than 15 points of batting average; that is, at least two-thirds of all players are expected to clutch-hit within .015 of their non-clutch batting average. It is likely even less than 10 points of batting average.

- If clutch hitting does exist at the 10-point level, that means that less than one player in 200 can hit more than 25 points better in the clutch—a very small effect, even in the best case.

- If clutch hitting does exist with a between-seasons correlation of .05, there would have been about a 99 percent chance that the Cramer test would have found more significance than it did.

- If clutch hitting does exist with a between-seasons correlation of .05, that means that a player who hits

110 points better in the clutch one year can be expected to hit only 5.5 points better in the clutch next year.

The results confirm other studies, including Pete Palmer's multiyear study (*By the Numbers*, March 1990), that failed to find clutch hitting.

In summary: The Cramer test doesn't prove that clutch hitting does not exist. But it does prove that, if clutch hitting does exist, for the vast majority of players it's at levels almost too small to be detectable or important and that previous clutch-hitting performance is not a reliable predictor of future clutch-hitting performance. This suggests that, in any case, it is probably impossible to distinguish good clutch hitters from bad. ■

Notes

1. There is a strict philosophical sense in which it can be said that no test can ever be certain that an effect exists or doesn't exist. That is, no matter how many data points in our sample, and no matter how evident it appears that there is an effect (or no effect), it is always possible, although perhaps vanishingly unlikely, that the observed differences (or lack thereof) were caused by chance. (For instance, it cannot be said for sure that Barry Bonds is a better hitter than Mario Mendoza, because there is an infinitesimally small probability that Mario is actually better but just had really bad luck.) However, this interpretation does not appear to be what James had in mind.

2. For clutch, I used the Elias "Late Inning Pressure Situations" definition—seventh inning or later, tied or down by 3 runs or less, unless the bases are loaded, in which case down by 4 runs was included. Thanks, as always, to Retrosheet. Note that my data occasionally differs slightly from Elias and perhaps other sources—my best guess is that Retrosheet's raw data differed from Elias's, causing Elias to count some at-bats as clutch, which I didn't, or vice versa. A full set of raw data is available from the author, or, at the time of writing, at http://www.philbirnbaum.com/clutch.txt.

3. And by extension, if a full season's worth of clutch hitting doesn't identify a good clutch hitter, neither can a good clutch postseason (e.g., Reggie Jackson).

4. Technical note: To generate a clutch difference from this normal distribution, I created a "fake" .250 hitter. I ran 208 random at-bats for him, giving him a 1-in-4 chance of getting a hit each at-bat. I then computed his batting average over those 208 at-bats and subtracted it from .250. According to the normal approximation to the binomial distribution, that random batting average should be normally distributed with mean .000 and standard deviation .030. So that batting-average difference for the "fake" player becomes a clutch talent for one of the simulated players.

5. GPOWER is available from http://www.psycho.uni-duesseldorf. de/aap/projects/gpower/. Thanks to Charlie Pavitt for letting me know about GPOWER, as well as for several suggestions that significantly improved this article.

Mapping the Fog

A Response to "Clutch Hitting and the Cramer Test"

Bill James

1. MY MODEL

In issue number 33 of *The Baseball Research Journal*, I published an article entitled "Underestimating the Fog." The thesis of this article is that we in sabermetrics have been relying on a method which doesn't actually work, under closer scrutiny, and we should stop relying on this method. "This method" is the practice of attempting to determine whether some characteristic within the game is "real" or a statistical artifact by comparing whether the players who do well in this area in one year also do well in the same performance category the next year, as one would expect them to if the skill under study was "real." I hope that made sense. . . . I'm a little confused myself, and, speaking of myself, I certainly was not suggesting that other researchers were guilty of this but I wasn't. I was more guilty than anyone. I had misled the public on a series of issues due to my own failure to think clearly about this one matter, and I felt it was important for me to stand up and take responsibility for that.

What I did not do in that article, however, was to establish that what I was saying was true. I argued that this was true, and I discussed the implications of that truth, but I did not attempt, in that forum, to demonstrate that this method does not in fact work reliably. This is the first order of business in this article: to demonstrate that what I was saying before was true (or, more carefully stated, to show you how you can demonstrate this to your own satisfaction).

Let us take the issue of clutch hitting, which is the most controversial of the many peripheral subjects entangled in the debate. Dick Cramer argued the following in 1977:

1. If clutch hitting really exists, one would expect that the players who were clutch hitters in 1969 would be clutch hitters again in 1970.

2. I have studied who was a clutch hitter in 1969 and who was a clutch hitter in 1970.

3. The lists do not correlate to any notable extent.

4. Ergo, clutch hitting does not exist.

I accepted this argument for about a quarter of a century, but eventually it began to trouble me. When it began to trouble me enough, I posed a counter-question to myself: Is it possible to create a model in which clutch hitting clearly exists but goes undetected by this type of analysis?

It is, in fact, possible. Let us create a "model league" based on the following assumptions:

1. The league consists of 100 batters.

2. Each batter has 600 at-bats.

3. Of those 600 at-bats, 150 are in clutch situations, 450 are not.

4. The average hitter will hit .270.

5. Individual batting averages can range from .170 to .370, but are normally distributed (bell-shaped curve) and are clustered around .270.

6. Eighty percent of the players will have the same expected batting average in clutch situations as in ordinary situations

7. However, the other 20 percent may hit significantly better or significantly worse in clutch situations than they do overall.

In clutch situations, the batting average of the other 20 percent was recalculated as:

Their regular batting average, minus 50 points, plus a random number between zero and one, divided by 10.

Thus, a .280 hitter in non-clutch situations can be a .230 hitter in clutch situations, or a .330 hitter in clutch situations, or anywhere in between, and any one figure is as likely as any other—for those players who did have a "clutch element" in their makeup. The average clutch effect, for those players who have one, is 25 points positive or negative.

You may or may not agree that this model represents a fair test of the clutch thesis. If you agree that it

does, end of subject. If you would argue that it does not . . . Dick Cramer, in his 1977 article, stated that "I have established clearly that clutch-hitting cannot be an important or general phenomenon." I would argue that if 20 percent of the hitters have clutch effects averaging 25 points, that is quite certainly an important and general phenomenon. Further, in several respects, this model exaggerates the impact of clutch hitting, which should make it easier to detect whether or not a clutch-hitting ability is an element of the mix. In this league there were 60,000 at-bats, which were neatly divided into 600 at-bats each for 100 players. In the real American League in 1969—one of the leagues included in Cramer's study—there were 65,536 at-bats, but there were only 25 players who had 550 or more at-bats, the rest of the at-bats being messily distributed among players who had 350, 170, 80, and 4 at-bats. This would make it much easier to detect the presence of clutch hitters in the model than in real life.

In the real leagues studied by Cramer, there were many players who had 520 at-bats one year but 25 the next, making those players—and those at bats—essentially useless as a basis for year-to-year comparison. In my model, all 100 players had 600 at-bats each year, with no one dropping out or coming in. This, again, would make it vastly easier to have meaningful year-to-year comparisons, in my model, than it would be in real life.

In my model, one-fourth of all at-bats are designated as "clutch" at-bats. In real life, it seems unlikely that the number of true "clutch" at-bats would be that large. In real life, a player probably has 50 or 75 high-pressure at-bats in a season. In my model, he had 150. This would make it vastly easier to detect clutch performers in the model than it would be in real life.

In my model, all at-bats are cleanly delineated as "clutch" or "non-clutch." In real life, it is extremely difficult to say to what extent any at-bat is "clutch" or "non-clutch." Again, this would make it much, much easier to detect the presence of clutch hitters in this model than it would be in real life.

If you object to the fact that only 20 percent of the players in this study had some clutch ability:

a) what if only 20 percent of players in real life have some clutch ability? and
b) it isn't crucial anyway. The conclusion wouldn't change if it was 40 percent or 50 percent.

Having constructed this model, I then simulated on a spreadsheet 600 at-bats for each player—450 in non-clutch situations and 150 under clutch conditions—

and figured for each player his batting average in "clutch" situations and his batting average in non-clutch situations. I did this for two seasons for each of the 100 players, creating a "clutch differential" for each player in each season. Each player's intended batting average changed from season to season, but his "clutch differential" remained the same. The spreadsheet on which this experiment was conducted is named "Clutch Consistency.XLS," and I will e-mail a copy of this spreadsheet to anyone who asks. At first glance it just looks like a vast collection of random numbers, but I think you can figure it out with a little effort.

This method does not exactly mirror Cramer's method in his 1977 article which I was using as a kind of whipping boy in "Underestimating the Fog." What I have described as "Cramer's method" is in fact two methods—an (a) method which was used to determine whether a player was a clutch hitter in any given season, and a (b) method which was used to determine whether those players identified as clutch players were consistent from season to season. I was interested entirely in the questions raised by the (b) method. The subject of my article could be stated as "Will Cramer's (b) method work reliably under real-life conditions, if we assume that his (a) method works?"

The (a) method I never discussed at all, for three reasons—

1. That this was not relevant to my article,
2. That his (a) method is much more complicated, and much harder to replicate in a model, than the method I preferred, and
3. I'll tell you later.

Anyway, in my model, we know that clutch hitting does exist, and that it does exist at what seems to me a very significant level. Yet when I compared the "clutch differentials" of the 100 players in the two seasons, the year-to-year consistency was far, far below the level at which any conclusion could be drawn from the data. Despite all of the steps I took to make clutch ability easier to spot in the model than it would be in real life, it remains essentially invisible.

In the study, a player's clutch contribution was labeled as "consistent" if he hit better in clutch situations than he did overall in both simulated seasons, or if he hit worse in both seasons. His clutch contribution was labeled as "inconsistent" if he was better one year and worse the other.

As you would expect, 50 percent of the players who had no actual clutch differential were consistent, and 50 percent were inconsistent. But of the players who

did have actual clutch differentials, 62.2 percent were consistent, while 37.8 percent tested as inconsistent, given these conditions.

Overall, then, 52.4 percent of the players in the study showed consistency in their clutch contribution. If 52.44 percent of the players in a group are consistent from year to year and there are 100 players in the group, what is the random chance that 50 of them or fewer will show up as consistent in one test?

It's 35 percent. Thus, no conclusion whatsoever can be drawn from the apparent lack of consistency in the data. Even when we know that the clutch effect does exist within the data, even when we give that effect an unreasonably clear chance to manifest itself, there is still a 35 percent chance that it will entirely disappear under this type of scrutiny.

What if 40 percent of the players have an "actual clutch effect," rather than 20 percent? At 40 percent, there is still a 14 percent chance that 50 or fewer of the 100 players will have positive year-to-year consistency—which means that we are still in a position where no conclusion can be drawn from the lack of documented consistency. Even if 50 percent of the players have an actual clutch effect, there remains a 9 percent chance that this would not show up in a test of 100 players.

2. RANDOM OBSERVATION

Part of the problem with measuring "agreement" is that "agreement" narrows the odds, and thus profoundly changes the percentages. Suppose that half of the players in a group are good clutch hitters, and half are poor clutch hitters. Suppose that you have a test of clutch ability which is 80 percent accurate. Under those conditions, how many players will measure as consistent, meaning that they measure the same both years? 68 percent. 64 percent will measure as "consistent" accurately—.80 times .80—and 4 percent will measure as "consistent" due to a repeated inaccuracy. If the measurement is 80 percent accurate, in a two-year period 64 percent of the players will have two accurate measurements, and 4 percent will have two inaccurate measurements.

If the test of clutch ability is 70 percent accurate, then, it will test as 58 percent accurate (.49 + .09). If the test of clutch ability is 60 percent accurate, it will test as 52 percent accurate (.36 plus .16).

Thus, in order to achieve 62 percent agreement, as we did in the model above, you have to have a test which is 75 percent accurate. This is actually more of a problem in the catcher-ERA studies than it is in the clutch-hitting studies.

3. REACTION TO "UNDERESTIMATING THE FOG"

In the first few weeks after "Underestimating the Fog" was published, I got reactions which were all over the map. However, the one thing that nobody said, in the first few weeks—at least, nobody said it where I happened to see it—was that what I was saying was not correct. Thus, I felt no pressure, in those opening weeks, to demonstrate that what I was saying was correct.

However, in the February 2005 edition of *By the Numbers*—which I think came out in June 2005, go figure—there were two articles which touched on the veracity of my central claim, and thus prompted me to put my supporting work on record.

These two articles tend to broaden the debate, and raise a number of points that I wanted to comment on. In the first of those two articles ("Comments on 'Underestimating the Fog'"), Jim Albert writes:

> I was interested in a statement that James made in this article regarding the existence of individual platoon tendencies. This was counter to the general conclusions Jay Bennett and I made in Chapter 4 of *Curve Ball*.

However, Dr. Albert doesn't say what the statement was that he disagreed with, and, pardon my obtuseness, but I'm not able to figure it out. I've read his comment three or four times, but my math skills are limited, and I just can't figure out what it is I said that he disagrees with. My ability to respond is thus impaired.

With this exception, I think that the rest of Dr. Albert's comments, including those critical of the article, seem to me to be fair and well-considered, and I have no response to them.

The following article, however, the Phil Birnbaum article entitled "Clutch Hitting and the Cramer Test," contains a number of statements that I wanted to comment on.

1) For the sake of clarity, the issue that I was discussing in "Underestimating the Fog" is peripheral to Birnbaum's article, and the issue that Birnbaum is discussing in his article was on the periphery of my article. I was writing about whether Cramer's (b) method works. Birnbaum is writing about whether clutch hitting could exist. These are not articles discussing the same subject.

2) I don't think that Birnbaum himself is confused about this (point 1), but he appends to his article a headnote which seems to suggest that he is respond-

ing directly to my article, and follows this by quoting two or three things I had said and responding to them. This creates the impression, to the reader, that we are writing about the same central issue. The longer his article goes, the more it drifts away from being a response to "Underestimating the Fog."

3) In my article I had written that "random data proves nothing—and it *cannot* be used as a proof of nothingness. Why? Because whenever you do a study, if your study completely fails, you will get random data. Therefore, when you get random data, *all* you may conclude is that your study has failed."

In response to this, Birnbaum says that

this is certainly false. It is true that, when you get random data, it is possible that "your study has failed." But it is surely *possible*, by examining your method, to show that the study was indeed well designed and that the random data does indeed reasonably suggest a finding of no effect.

Reasonably suggests? We're not talking about reasonable suggestions here; we're talking about valid inferences from the data. Cramer didn't say that his data "reasonably suggests" the absence of clutch hitters; he said—incorrectly—that his data "established clearly that clutch-hitting cannot be an important or general phenomenon." Joe Morgan, Tim McCarver, and generations of sportscasters before them have reasonably suggested that some players may have a special ability to rise to the occasion. The task in front of us is not to reasonably suggest the opposite, it is to find clear and convincing evidence one way or the other.

In the process of doing this, studies resulting in random data show only that the study has failed to identify clutch-hitting ability. I stand by my statement without any reservation.

4) What Birnbaum means by "The Cramer Test" in his title is also Cramer's (b) method; he doesn't actually use Cramer's (a) method, either. In point of fact, nothing in Birnbaum's article examines the effectiveness either of Cramer's (a) method *or* his (b) method. Birnbaum's article examines not whether Cramer's method works, but whether his conclusion—that clutch hitting doesn't exist at a significant level—is true. He poses this question:

James disputes this result, writing that "it is simply not possible to detect consistency in clutch hitting by the use of this method." Is he correct? If clutch hitting

were a consistent skill, would the Cramer test have been powerful enough to pick it up?

But he never actually addresses this question. His subsequent research has to do with whether Cramer is correct, and has nothing at all to do with whether his method works. He drops Cramer's (a) method, and performs a test of statistical significance on the (b) method, the results of which, in my opinion, he misinterprets.

5) For the sake of clarity, I take no position whatsoever about whether clutch hitting exists or does not exist. I simply don't have any idea.

6) Either Birnbaum or myself is profoundly confused about the difference between "no evidence of effect" and "evidence of no effect." Birnbaum writes:

The results: a correlation coefficient (r) of .0155, for an r-squared of .0002. These are very low numbers; the probability of an f-statistic (that is, the significance level) was .86. Put another way, that's a 14 percent significance level—far from the 95 percent we usually want in order to conclude there's an effect.

But this data—and all of Birnbaum's data—actually doesn't indicate that there is no effect. In fact, it shows that there is some evidence that there may be such an effect, but that this evidence merely is far too weak to say for sure one way or the other. This is a very, very different thing—and one absolutely may not segue from one into the other in the way that Birnbaum is attempting.

Why? For this reason. Suppose that you took a ten-at-bat sample of Stan Musial's career and asked "Does this ten-at-bat sample provide clear and convincing evidence that Musial was an above-average hitter?"

Of course the answer would be "No, it doesn't." In the 10 at-bats Musial might go 4 for 10 with 2 homers, but in a ten-at-bat sample, A. J. Hinch might go 4 for 10 with 2 homers. You would conclude, by Birnbaum's method, that this provided very, very little evidence that Musial was in fact an above-average hitter.

Suppose that you broke Musial's 1948 season down into a series of 61 ten-at-bat sequences, and tested each one for evidence that Musial was an above-average hitter.

You would certainly fail, 61 times in a row—indeed, in many of those ten-at-bat samples, Musial would appear to be a below-average hitter.

By Birnbaum's logic, this would provide overwhelming evidence that Stan Musial in 1948 was not

really an above-average hitter, since he had failed 61 straight significance tests.

But wait a minute . . . the real-life problem is worse than that. Suppose that you took each ten-at-bat sample of Musial's season, and you buried it in a pile of one thousand at-bats by ordinary hitters, and you then tested the significance of the 1,010-at-bat composite. This would make the f-statistic (significance level) much higher, while making the correlation coefficient even lower. You quite certainly would find no evidence whatsoever that Musial was pushing the group to be above average.

This is the real-life problem that we confront here. The clutch-hitting contribution, if it does exist, is buried in large piles of random and confusing data, with very little marking the clutch contribution to enable us to dig it out and examine it.

I'm not saying it can't be done; there are lots of clever people in the world, and it probably can be done, eventually. But the problem is a hell of a lot harder than Birnbaum realizes.

7) Birnbaum writes "Let's suppose a clutch-hitting ability existed and that the ability was normally distributed with a standard deviation (SD) of 0.030 (that is, 30 points of batting average.)"

But the scale proposed here is massive. The standard deviation of batting average itself isn't 30 points. The standard deviation of batting average, for all players qualifying for the batting title in the years 2000 to 2004, is 28 points (.0277).

Birnbaum's argument is "if a clutch hitting ability existed on this scale, this analysis would find it." But if a clutch hitting ability existed on anything remotely approaching that scale, Stevie Wonder could find it. If a clutch-hitting ability existed on anything like that scale, we wouldn't be having this discussion.

If the standard deviation of clutch ability was 30 points, there would be a very significant number of players who hit 50 points better in clutch situations, throughout their careers. If that was the case, we would have known it twenty years ago. If the standard deviation of clutch ability was 30 points, there would be one or two players in each generation who would improve their performance in clutch situations by 100 points. We could find that without doing any of this stuff.

8) No one has ever suggested that clutch hitting operates on that scale. Listen to the things that Tim McCarver says about clutch hitting, or Joe Morgan, or any of those druids. What they are saying is not that everybody has some huge clutch effect but rather that

there are some few players—some tough, veteran players who have real character, and who might someday even go on to become TV broadcasters—who are able to come through in the clutch. Sometimes.

In my model of the problem, I envisioned this as 20 percent of the players, having a clutch effect of 25 points (.025). That creates a standard deviation, for the group as a whole, of 11 points.

Maybe it's not 11; maybe it's 12, or 14, or 6, or 2. It sure as hell isn't 30.

9) Let us talk for a moment about Cramer's (a) method. Cramer's (a) method—his method of determining whether a player was or was not a clutch hitter—was to contrast two measurements. One was an estimate of the player's presumptive win contribution, based on his total batting statistics. A home run is a home run. If a player hit a home run in the ninth inning of a 12–1 ballgame, that was the same as if he hit a walk-off homer in the bottom of the ninth. The other was an event-by-event assessment of what the player had contributed to his team's wins. If a player hit a home run in the ninth inning of a 12–1 ballgame, that would essentially be a nonevent, whereas if a player hit a David Ortiz shot, that might be worth 100 times as much.

If a player ranked much better in the second evaluation than in the first, Cramer's (a) method designated him a clutch hitter. If he ranked much better in the first evaluation, Cramer designated him as a non-clutch player.

Neither Birnbaum nor I, in discussing Cramer's article, made any effort to replicate or to examine this method, what I have been calling Cramer's (a) method. We both tested his (b) method, but replaced his (a) method with something more straightforward. I had three reasons for not doing so, two of which I explained before.

My third reason for skipping this system is that I wanted a system which I knew would work. I wanted to test whether or not Cramer's (b) method would work if we assumed that his (a) method worked reasonably well. I therefore substituted an (a) method that I knew would work, demonstrated that it did work, and moved forward from there.

This leaves unexamined the question of whether or not Cramer's (a) method would work. Could one, in fact, identify clutch hitters by contrasting a player's overall offensive work with his win contribution, figured from the sequence of events?

I don't know. I'm skeptical. I doubt that it would work. The problem, it seems to me, is that the method might be heavily liable to random influences.

Here's how we could tell if the method works or not. . . . I'll get around to doing this eventually, I suppose, if nobody beats me to it. Construct a "model universe," as I did in my study, and designate 15 or 20 percent of the players as clutch hitters, as I did in my study. Then simulate games, and evaluate the output by the method Cramer used to evaluate the real-life events.

One would then be in a position to ask "Do the players who are *actually* clutch hitters, in the underlying codes, show up as clutch hitters in the output?" By random chance, 50 percent of them would show up as better clutch hitters than neutral-case hitters. By the method I used, 75 percent of the clutch hitters were identified as clutch hitters. I would be very, very surprised if Cramer's (a) method would match that. I would guess you would get 53, 55 percent accuracy, somewhere in there.

Why? Too much weight on too few outcomes. I am guessing—but I don't really know—that in Cramer's (a) method, 50 percent of the variance between the player's situation-neutral win contribution and his situational win contribution will be determined by 30 at-bats or fewer (if the player plays regularly). Thus, the player's ranking in this system would seem to be heavily influenced by random deviations in performance in a small number of at-bats, and thus the players who were "truly" clutch hitters, in the model, might very often not be identified as clutch players.

10) Again for the sake of clarity, I am not suggesting that my "clutch indicator" system works, either. My system worked, in my model, only because I set up the model to enable it to work within the model. It wouldn't work worth a crap in real life.

Also, my system was 75 percent accurate only in the sense of agreeing that a clutch hitter was a clutch hitter if we already knew that he was. But my system would also identify as clutch hitters a large number of players who actually weren't coded to hit well in the clutch, but who had merely done so at random.

Ultimately, what we need is a system which can reliably identify a clutch hitter, if one exists. That doesn't seem to me like an impossible problem. But we're nowhere near to having such a thing.

11) Birnbaum did attempt to demonstrate that his (a) method worked; he just did a couple of things that, in my opinion, undermine his attempt.

Look, what I was trying to say in "Underestimating the Fog" is "You can't assume that your system works. You have to prove that it works. You have to demonstrate that it works, detail by detail."

We are no closer to that now than we were a year ago. Cramer's article remains immensely important, for this reason: that it proposed a road map through a wilderness. That was a wonderful thing; I appreciated that 28 years ago, and I appreciate it now.

But the first maps drawn of America showed huge waterways cutting through the Rocky Mountains—and that was after the explorers finally realized they weren't in India. Maps drawn of the moon even fifty years ago were comically inaccurate.

I don't know how accurate Cramer's (a) method really is. But the limitations of his (b) method are such that, even if his (a) method was 100 percent accurate, that might not be enough to justify the conclusions he thought he had reached . . . the conclusions that we thought he had reached. I doubt that the (a) method works, either.

It is my opinion that there is an immense amount of work to be done before we really begin to understand this issue. ∎

—July 2005

This article originally appeared online at www.philbirnbaum.com/mappingthefog.pdf.

Response to "Mapping the Fog"

Phil Birnbaum

I n a famous clutch-hitting study in 1977, Dick Cramer took 122 players who had substantial playing time in both 1969 and 1970. He ran a regression on their 1969 clutch performance versus their 1970 performance. Finding a low correlation, he concluded that clutch performance did not repeat and that, therefore, this constituted strong evidence that clutch ability did not exist.

Bill James, in his recent essay "Underestimating the Fog," disputes that the Cramer study did indeed disprove clutch hitting.

In my essay "Clutch Hitting and the Cramer Test" I explicitly disagreed with the second of these points and implicitly with the first. In "Measuring the Fog," Bill James criticized aspects of my essay and reasserted that his position was correct.

But I still believe that Bill is not correct.

Bill's position can be summarized by these two quotes, from "Underestimating the Fog":

> . . . even if clutch-hitting skill did exist and was extremely important, [Cramer's] analysis would still reach the conclusion that it did, because it is not possible to detect consistency by the use of this method [regression on this year's clutch performance against next year's].

> . . . random data proves nothing—and it cannot be used as proof of nothingness. Why? Because whenever you do a study, if your study completely fails, you will get random data. Therefore, when you get random data, all you may conclude is that your study has failed.

To which I respond:

1. Yes, random data on its own proves nothing. But combined with evidence that your test would have found an effect if it existed, the random data is evidence that the effect doesn't exist.

2. It is possible to detect clutch-hitting consistency (at reasonable, nontrivial levels) by the use of the Cramer test.

3. It is possible to show what effects the Cramer test is capable of finding and, therefore, to what extent a "finding of no effect" disproves clutch hitting.

On point 1, Bill charges me with a fallacy—the fallacy of believing that, if a test finds no evidence of clutch hitting, this means that clutch hitting does not exist. I agree with Bill that this logic would be seriously incorrect—but I neither stated it nor implied it. My point was that, if a test finds no evidence of clutch hitting and you can show that the test would have found clutch hitting if it existed, well, then, and only then, are you entitled to draw a conclusion about the nonexistence of clutch hitting. Either Bill misread what I said or I didn't say it clearly enough.

Point 2 is the most important, because it's the point of greatest contention between Bill and myself. Bill thinks you can't detect clutch hitting by the use of the Cramer test. I believe you can. The reason for the difference is that we're using different tests.

Bill's test, in essence, consists of looking at players in consecutive years and assigning each player one of four symbols. He gets a " $+$ $+$ " if he was a clutch hitter both years; " $-$ $-$ " if he was a choke hitter both years; and " $-$ $+$ " or " $+$ $-$ " if he was split. Bill then counts the number of consistent players ($+$ $+$ or $-$ $-$) and compares it to the number of inconsistent players ($+$ $-$ or $-$ $+$). If clutch hitting existed, there would be significantly more consistent players than inconsistent.

My test, which is the same test that Cramer used (but with Bill's measure of clutch rather than Cramer's "(a)" measure, as Bill calls it), uses the actual numbers and runs a regression. So if player A was 50 points higher in the clutch one year and 10 points higher the next, I add the pair ($+50$, -10) to my sample. I then run a (standard STAT101) regression on all the pairs and look for a significance level.

The point is that Bill's test is much, much weaker than mine. I think Bill is correct that with his test, "even if clutch-hitting skill did exist and was extremely important," the test would be incapable of finding it.

By using only the signs, Bill lost a huge amount of information—he kept the consistency aspect but not the amount of consistency. To Bill, a hitter who hits

one point better in both years gets the same weight as a player who hits 50 points better in both years.

(As an aside, I would bet that, if Bill threw out all data points except those where the absolute value of clutch hitting was over 25 points both seasons, the test would be much more likely to find significance. But that's not important right now.)

By analogy, suppose that team A wins three games against the Brewers all by scores of 5–4, while team B wins three games against the same Brewers all by scores of 10–1. Bill's test treats the teams the same, scoring them both as "+ + +," and is incapable of noticing that team B is actually much better than team A.

But to my test (and Cramer's), the amount of clutch hitting is considered. And so the Cramer test is capable of finding significant clutch effects.

My first test asked this question: If clutch hitting were normally distributed with a standard deviation of 30 points, would the Cramer test find it?

It would and it did. The second row of my table (see my article "Clutch Hitting and the Cramer Test," at page 72) contains the results of 14 simulations of a season where clutch hitting was normally distributed with an SD of 30 points. Of those 14 simulations, the Cramer test found the effect, with statistical significance, in 11 of the 14 seasons. Seven of the 14 were extremely significant, rounding to .00.

Now, you could argue that 11 out of 14 isn't enough—the test is powerful enough only 79 percent of the time. A full 21 percent of the time, the test will fail.

And that's true if you run the test only on one season's worth of data. But I ran it on 14 seasons. If clutch hitting at the .030 level should be caught 11 out of 14 times, and the real-life data (top row of the same table) showed significance 0 out of 14 times, does that not "reasonably suggest" (Bill doesn't like this expression) that clutch hitting at .030 does not exist?

In my essay, I stopped there, but I could have done a more formal calculation. It looks like there's about a 21 percent chance of failing to find significance for a single season. Let's up that to 30 percent just to be conservative. We found 14 of those in a row. What's the chance of a 30 percent shot happening 14 times in a row? It's 1 in 21 million.

In "Mapping the Fog," what is Bill's response to this test? He doesn't dispute the method or the conclusion. Rather, he argues that 0.030 is a massive SD for clutch hitting. (I implied that it was moderate; Bill is correct—it is massive.) Of course this method can find an SD of 30 points, Bill says. "Stevie Wonder could find it."

Bill writes that "maybe [the SD is] . . . 12, or 14, or 6, or 2. It sure as hell isn't 30." Which is fair enough.

But my original essay actually does go on to repeat the same test for 20 points, then 15 points, then 10 points, then 7.5 points—using exactly the same method, which Bill doesn't dispute (and uses himself, as we will see shortly). Bill does not mention these subsequent tests at all—nor does he mention my conclusion that the Cramer test (with 14 seasons of data) is "doubtful" with a standard deviation of 10 points, or that I agree with him that the test "fails" if the SD of clutch hitting is actually only 7.5 points.

In "Measuring the Fog," Bill suggests a different distribution—he supposes 80 percent of the population has no tendency for clutch hitting whatsoever, and the 20 percent vary uniformly (i.e., a flat curve rather than a bell curve) between –50 points clutch and +50 points clutch.

He goes on to do a simulation very similar to what I did. He finds (and I agree) that the test is weak and will almost always fail to find an effect. But Bill used his "signs" test rather than the Cramer regression, and that's why he failed to find any effect.

To prove that, I repeated my regression but used the James distribution rather than my normal distribution. (James says the SD of his distribution is .011, but I found .013.) My results: Out of my 56 simulated seasons, 11 showed statistical significance at the .05 level in a positive direction. If the data were random, it should have been 2.5 percent of 56, or 1.4.

Again, I didn't do this in the essay, but what is the probability of getting exactly 11 positives out of 56, where the chance of each positive is 2.5 percent? If I've done the calculation right, it's about 1 in 8.6 million. (It's higher for 11 or more, but I'm too lazy to run the normal approximation to binomial right now. It's definitely less than 1 in a million, in any case.)

(By the way, I think the 11 successes might have been a random fluke. But even if we got only 6 successes, I [lazily] believe that would still be significant at the 1 percent level.)

In point form, then:

• Under Bill's distribution, the simulated Cramer test succeeded in finding positive significance about 19 percent of the time in 56 tries.

• Random data would, by definition, find positive significance 2.5 percent of the time.

• The chance of the 19 percent happening by chance in 56 tries, where the real probability is 2.5 percent, is much less than 1 in a million.

On that basis, I would conclude that the Cramer test over 14 single seasons "reasonably suggests" that a level of clutch hitting as described by Bill's distribution does not exist.

But I guess there are really two conclusions:

- With 14 separate seasons' worth of data, the Cramer test "works" in that it identifies the existence of clutch hitting at the Bill James distribution;

- As an aside, the real-life data do provide a reasonable basis to conclude that, if clutch hitting does indeed exist, it does so at a lower level than the Bill James distribution.

So, now going back to Bill's original two quotes:

> . . . even if clutch-hitting skill did exist and was extremely important, [Cramer's] analysis would still reach the conclusion that it did, because it is not possible to detect consistency by the use of this method [regression on this year's clutch performance against next year's].

It seems to me that Bill believes this because he used a much weaker signs test rather than a full regression. (Although, to be fair, I don't know whether the Cramer test succeeds using Cramer's own measure of clutch hitting. It might, or it might not.) I believe that the data and logic fully support the conclusion that, for a large enough effect (such as Bill's distribution) and enough seasons of data (say, the 14 that I used), the Cramer test quite easily detects consistency.

> . . . random data proves nothing—and it cannot be used as proof of nothingness. Why? Because whenever you do a study, if your study completely fails, you will get random data. Therefore, when you get random data, all you may conclude is that your study has failed.

As I argued earlier, I believe this is not true—random data, combined with a powerful enough test, is legitimate evidence of "nothingness"—or, at least, a small and bounded amount of somethingness.

And, judging from Bill's response, I don't think he believes this quote himself. His own test of whether the signs test would pick up an effect proves that. If he really believed that random data proved nothing, what would be the point of checking if the test could produce nonrandom data? Answer: He really means that random data proves nothing only if random data would come out in any case.

And so I wonder if by this quote Bill actually meant what I meant—that, taken alone, random data is not sufficient proof of nothingness—and just overstated his case.

Having said all this, my overall impression is that Bill and I do, in fact, substantially agree and that a large part of our disagreement stems from Bill's having used a test that doesn't work, whereas I used a test that does work. Bill correctly concludes that you can't disprove clutch hitting from his test, and I (believe I) correctly conclude that you can disprove a certain level of clutch hitting from my test.

Bill writes that "I take no position whatsoever about whether clutch hitting exists or does not exist." But he does acknowledge that, if clutch hitting exists, it must have a standard deviation that doesn't even approach 30 points ("or Stevie Wonder could find it"). My position is similar—I don't know whether it exists or not either—but I believe that, if it does exist, the simulations prove that the Cramer test has lowered the possible SD down to 10 points or even less.

Our only large disagreement, I think, is that Bill argues strongly, in absolute terms, that the Cramer method can't work. I argue that the absolutist formulation is wrong. The Cramer method is as legitimate as any other statistical method. With enough data—exactly how much data depends on the size of the effect you're looking for—the test is powerful enough to provide good evidence for the lack of the effect.

—July 2005

This article originally appeared online at www.philbirnbaum.com/responsetomappingthefog.pdf.

Clutch Hitting Revisited

Dick Cramer, Pete Palmer

Do clutch hitters exist? More precisely, are there any batters whose performance in critical game situations consistently exceeds expectations, as established both by that batter's performance in less critical situations and also by the relative performance of average batters in critical game situations?

Thirty years ago one of us published a first investigation of clutch hitting,[1] using 1969 and 1970 data[2] that at the time seemed the only play-by-play information that might ever become available. Its conclusions, that any clutch abilities were too slight to be either detectable or meaningful, have been confirmed repeatedly[3] as much more data have emerged. However, skepticism remains. The occasional stresses that all of us experience in our daily lives are certainly felt as negative influences on our own "clutch performances," and professional athletes in particular often talk about the challenge of contending with the pressures of critical game situations. This "clutch hitting" dialogue exemplifies the fascinating contrasts that occasionally arise about reality—contrasts between human perceptions and the results of objective investigation.

For example, recently Bill James[4] has proposed that the existence of clutch hitters, as exemplified by David Ortiz's recent heroics, is obscured by "fog"—that is, the unavoidable random variation in the performances of all players and game situations that underlie those objective investigations. Perhaps, he says, clutch hitting is a strong, and so more consistent and detectable, ability only for certain classes of players, identifiable by their personality type or overall hitting style.

In response we have performed several new studies, taking fullest advantage of the last fifty years of play-by-play that Retrosheet[5] now provides, seeking objective answers to the following additional questions about clutch hitting.

1. Do major-league batting performances actually decline in critical game situations?

2. How thick is that "fog" that Bill reminds us about?

3. Over the past fifty years, what are the largest "clutch" or "non-clutch" career performances?

4. With respect to Bill's proposed player classes, how many players would need to be members in order to be persuasive about clutch hitting?

5. Would a "clutch hitting" skill reflect well on the players who possessed it?

For those readers who prefer conclusions without statistical equations or argumentative logic, here are those objective answers.

1. The average batting production by major-league players with runners in scoring position, as measured by OPS from 1957 through 2007, is indistinguishable (if anything very slightly higher) for the 15 percent of plate appearances when the game is late and close (as defined by Elias), once appropriate corrections are made for the observable distinctions of late and close situations, with a substantial superiority of the pitchers offsetting a greater frequency of intentional walks and a modest superiority of the batters.

2. The "fog" of random statistical variation is much greater than most baseball fans realize, even those with an analytical bent. Indeed, that random variability has about the same effect on season outcomes such as batting titles and pennant winners as do differences among player skills. Also, as the number of high-pressure game situations that any individual batter encounters is small, objective evidence that some particular hitter's superior record in clutch situations is a skill rather than a chance result is very unlikely ever to appear. To that extent, we agree with Bill James.

3. On a career basis, David Ortiz and a different clutch-hitter nominee,[6] Mark Grace, are both around a third of the way down a ranked list of "clutch performances," among all players with 3,000 plate appearances from 1957 through 2007. Positive, but hardly remarkable. The best career clutch performance of the last half-century was by Scott Fletcher, who on average contributed to his teams about ten more runs per year (or one game

per season in the standings) than his season statistics imply.[7] At the bottom of the ranked list is Richard Hidalgo, who contributed ten fewer runs. The overall distribution of these 897 career clutch performances is entirely consistent with chance deviations around our first finding, that batters in general perform no differently in clutch situations.[8]

4. The considerable thickness of the fog also makes identifying any class of players likely to possess a "clutch ability" into a considerable challenge. Inspection of the ranked list does suggest a tendency for power hitters to provide lower clutch performances. However this tendency may also reflect slight weaknesses in the metrics we have used.

5. The concluding suggestion was that clutch abilities are too slight to be either detectable or meaningful. We also now know that batters in general perform no differently in clutch situations. If a batter's performance in clutch situations truly exceeded that in other situations, might that not indicate that he was putting forward a less than maximal effort in non-clutch situations? Why would that be a desirable player characteristic?

We now describe, in general terms, the studies that lead to these conclusions (methodological details, of course, being available from the authors). First, perhaps the most important new finding. We compare the general performance of batters in tense game situations with performance in all situations, for two groups—one based on the Elias definition of "late and close" and involving all major-league plate appearances from 1957 through 1979, and the other based on the Mills brothers' model (see below) and involving only the previously mentioned group of 897 players whose major-league careers were clearly more successful. For this purpose we use the widely accepted OPS metric, as introduced by one of us.[9] Here are the results.

Group	OPS in Tense Situations	OPS in All Situations
All players, Elias "late and close" (15% of appearances)	.704	.715
891 players, tensest 10% of plate appearances (Mills)	.779	.771

Certainly factors other than tension affect the average outcome of "late and close" plate appearances. The best available pitchers will be used (depressing OPS in tense situations), but pinch-hitters are used more and

intentional walks occur twice as often (raising OPS in tense situations). However, we estimate that these factors roughly cancel one another, so that, as the tabulated OPS values themselves suggest, the performance of major-league hitters is little if at all affected by game-situation tension.

Further investigations require a working definition of pure clutch performance, and we follow other analysts in using the approach that the Mills brothers pioneered.[10] The probable outcome of any game fluctuates at-bat by at-bat until the game ends, and this probability fluctuation constitutes a "win value," a positive or negative contribution that a batter makes to his team's chance of winning and that is determined by the outcome of each and every plate appearance. The sum of these win values over every appearance in a particular batter's career becomes a direct measurement of that batter's total win value. Division of that total performance by the number of plate appearances yields the batter's average win performance.

However, there is a general propensity for superior hitters to have superior win performances in any game situation. In order to isolate "clutchness," a possible tendency for a hitter to be more effective in critical game situations, this general propensity must be removed from that hitter's total win value. Linear weights (also introduced by one of us) provide a thoroughly tested measure of situation-independent hitting skill. We can then compare these two measurements, win performances depending only on how the probability of victory changed after each plate performance, and linear weights depending only on the fundamental counting statistics. Correlation of the 897 players' seasonal win performances now available with their corresponding linear-weight totals yields this general propensity, as depicted by the diagonal line in figure 1. The "clutch" or "non-clutch" performance of a player in a particular season then becomes the distance by which his total win performance in that season lies above or below the particular position on that diagonal determined by his linear-weight total. Figure 1 also shows these "clutchness" results for each season of David Ortiz's career. His reputation for clutch ability was built in 2005 and 2006. His hitting in 2007 was even slightly better overall (the 2007 point is farther to the right of the graph) but less timely (the 2007 point is also lower), yielding a lower-than-average "clutchness" result.

However, no one doubts that baseball is a "percentage game"—that, because of batter-uncontrollability and therefore random variations such as "bad bounces" and "fat pitches," good performances can produce bad

FIGURE 1. David Ortiz's Clutch Performances by Season
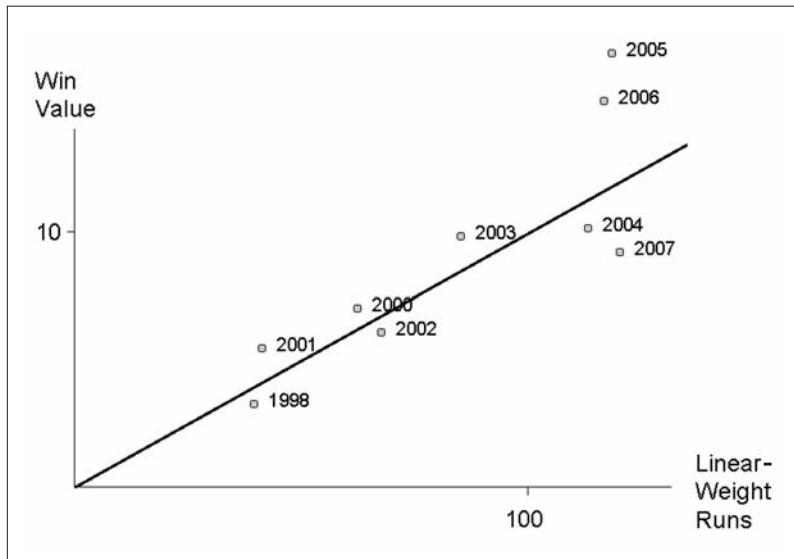
results and vice versa. To what extent might David Ortiz's historically superior clutch performances in 2005 and 2006 be matters of good fortune? This type of question motivated us to estimate the general magnitudes of these inevitable and unavoidable random variations in both win value and linear-weight performances, using a variety of computer-modeling approaches.

Another way of expressing this central concern is shown in figure 2, which compares the "clutch performance results" we have just defined (at the bottom) with a curve representing our various estimates (which all agree within 10 percent or so) of these random variations in clutch performance (or, in Bill James's language, the density of the "fog"). As the graph suggests and as probability theory confirms,

FIGURE 2. Comparing the "Fog" to the Clutch "Results"
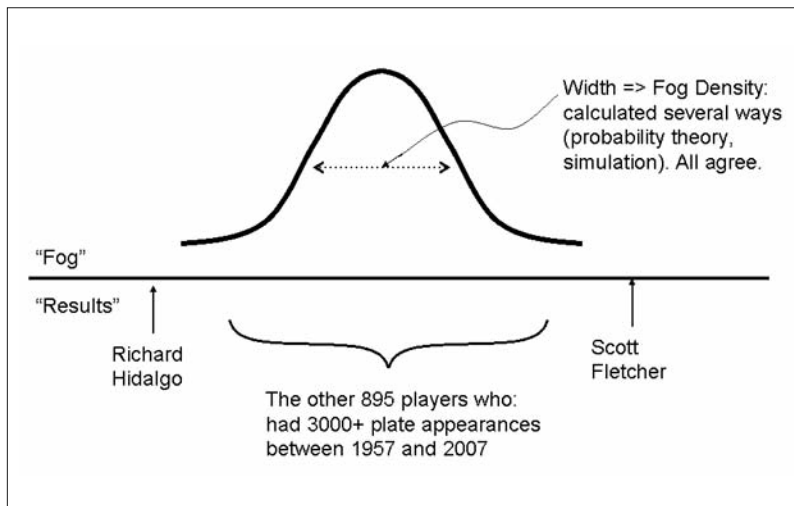
nothing in the overall distribution of "clutch-performance results" for the 897 most active batters over the past fifty years proposes that their "cause" is anything other than random fluctuations.

Because of both the importance of the result and the uncertainties resulting from any individual computer model, the largest component of this study involved devising and applying several independent computational approaches. The agreement among their results is encouraging.

Here are brief descriptions of these approaches:

Direct simulation, or actual "play" of 1,220 games with 18 similar batters and using the same outcome probabilities regardless of "game situation."

Actual "clutchness" distributions are compared with a performance distribution that is undoubtedly random—in this case, the remainder from dividing the day of the month of the game by 10 is compared with actual seasonal win-performance-to-linear-weight "clutchness."

Considering that Ortiz's two greatest "clutch" seasons were consecutive, perhaps suggesting that "clutch ability" is real but fleeting, we recapitulated a key component of the original study by calculating the correlation coefficient between "clutch performance results" in all consecutive seasons of at least 250 BFPs each for every one of those 895 most successful batters. The resulting r^2 value of .002 is as inconsequential as it looks. For comparison, the r^2 value in consecutive seasons for OPS itself is 0.43.

Presumably batters feel pressure most strongly at the starts of their major-league careers, when they are still unproven. However the batting average of these 895 batters in their first hundred BFP, .260, is not very different from their collective career batting average.

Thus the results of the original study[11] are yet again confirmed, this time by every analytic approach we could devise and mostly when 50 seasons of major-league play were used. Over this period there is no convincing evidence

COURTESY OF THE BOSTON RED SOX

Red Sox second baseman Dustin Pedroia greets designated hitter David Ortiz as he rounds the bases. Especially in 2005 and 2006, Ortiz reinforced his reputation for clutchness. But was his superior performance during that period only a matter of good fortune—that is, of random variation, of "fog"?

that any fluctuation of any batter's performance in tense situations has had any cause beyond random variation. Furthermore, because overall batting performance is unaffected by game situation, there would be no honor in being identified as a clutch hitter. Why shouldn't a major-league batting professional give his best effort regardless of the game situation?

This conundrum will no doubt continue, the conflict between the common feeling that tension undermines batting performances in critical game situations—a feeling expressed even by many of the most experienced and successful major-league batters—and the actual outcomes of such situations. ∎

Notes

1. Richard D. Cramer, "Do Clutch Hitters Exist?" *The Baseball Research Journal* (1977): 74–79.
2. Eldon G. Mills and Harlan D. Mills, *Player Win Averages: A Computer Guide to Winning Baseball Players* (South Brunswick, N.J.: A. S. Barnes, 1970); 1970 data provided by Pete Palmer.
3. Cyril Morong, Clutch Hitting Links, www.geocities.com/cyrilmorong@sbcglobal.net/ClutchLinks2.htm.
4. Bill James, "Mr Clutch: Big Papi, Chipper, Pujols Come Through When It Counts," sportsillustrated.cnn.com, http://sportsillustrated.cnn.com/2007/baseball/mlb/11/30/james.clutch/index.html, 30 November 2007; Bill James, "Underestimating the Fog," *The Baseball Research Journal* 33 (2004): 29–33.
5. Tom M. Tango, Mitchel G. Lichtman, and Andrew E. Dolphin, *The Book: Playing the Percentages in Baseball* (N.p.: TMA Press, 2006).
6. Ibid.
7. On updating these results to include Retrosheet's additional data back to 1954 and thereby adding Vic Wertz, his clutch contributions (during the last half of his career) averaged 14 runs/season more than his conventional statistics imply, making Wertz by far the highest extended clutch performer of the last half century.
8. SABR, www.sabr.org, Publications / Journals / Addenda; Retrosheet, http://www.retrosheet.org/lifetime_clutch.htm.
9. John Thorn and Pete Palmer, *Total Baseball* (New York: Warner Books, 1989).
10. Mills and Mills, *Player Win Averages*.
11. Cramer, "Do Clutch Hitters Exist?" *BRJ* (1977).

A Pitcher Shows His Age

The Case Study of Ace Winger

Kent von Scheliha

Ace Winger broke into the big leagues at the tender age of 21 and went on to a productive twenty-year-long pitching career. By the time he hung up his cleats at 40, he had notched 272 victories and logged 4,157 innings. He was known for his command of a bewildering array of pitches as well as for his pranks, some of which are the stuff of legend. In one spring-training game he was called in for relief. He strolled in from the bullpen dressed head to toe in a Frankenstein costume, complete with neck bolts. When the plate umpire told him to go back to the clubhouse and suit up, Ace raised his arms in the air and growled. Blue was not amused; Ace was booted.

Winger's accomplishments on the field alone are worthy of a retrospective analysis, but there is another reason his pitching record deserves our attention. As luck would have it, Ace's career trajectory happens to be a very good representation of how we would expect a pitcher's performance to evolve as he ages. Of all the elite pitchers in major-league history, he put up the numbers that come closest to what could be considered "typical."

More on the criteria that were used to select Winger for the subject of this study later. First, let's establish a number of parameters that will help gauge the effects that aging had on his endurance, power, control, and, most importantly, his ability to win games. They are: *innings pitched* (IP), *wins* (W), *earned run average* (ERA), *home runs per nine innings* (HR/9), *strikeouts per nine innings* (K/9), *walks per nine innings* (BB/9), *hits per nine innings* (H/9), *walks + hits per inning pitched* (WHIP)

In the series of graphs that follow, each performance parameter is plotted against Ace Winger's age. Two sets of data are presented in each graph. The points show the actual numbers he logged. The lines are curve fits through the data points. Mathematically, they range from first-order to fourth-order polynomials, depending on what creates the smoothest, or "best," fit. The point of drawing the curves is to help illustrate the data trends and give a clearer visual representation of how his numbers changed as he got older.

Winger's number of innings increased steadily in his early years, leveling off in his late twenties, followed by a gradual, almost linear decline. A pitcher's physical endurance tells only part of the story, though. He is more likely to stay in games longer, and thus log more innings, when he is pitching well and winning.

FIGURE 1. Innings Pitched
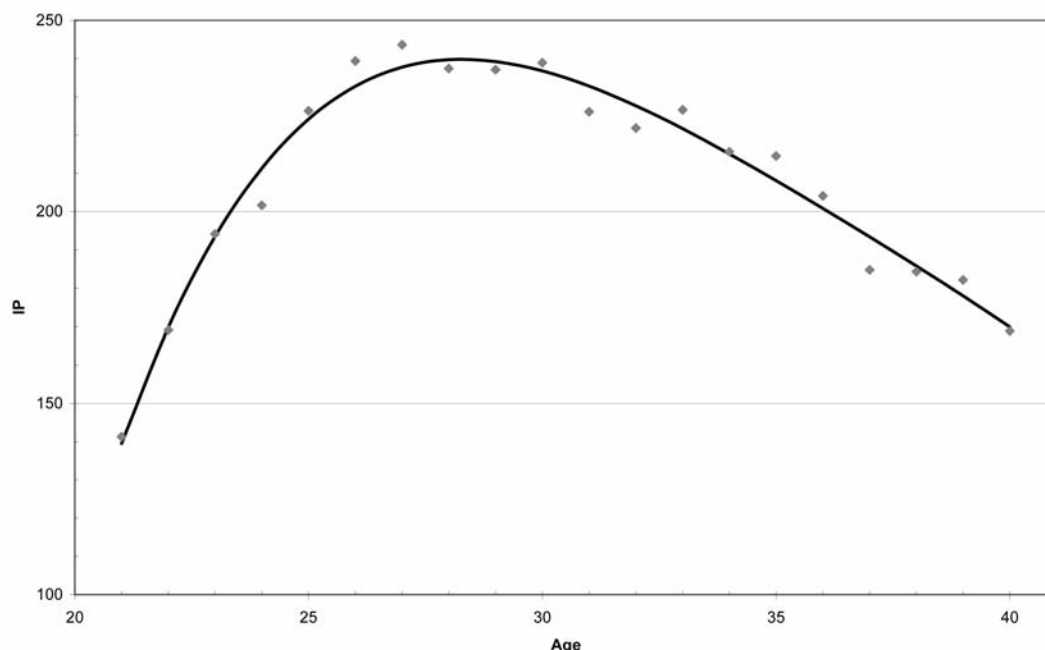
Ace was no exception, as figure 2 shows.

Conventional baseball wisdom says that a player's performance peaks around the age of 27. Winger had his highest win total at that very age, and the curve suggests that his best years were in his late twenties. Not surprisingly, the shapes of the curves for innings pitched and for wins are nearly identical. Thus, we should expect a close correlation between wins and ERA, right?

FIGURE 2. Wins
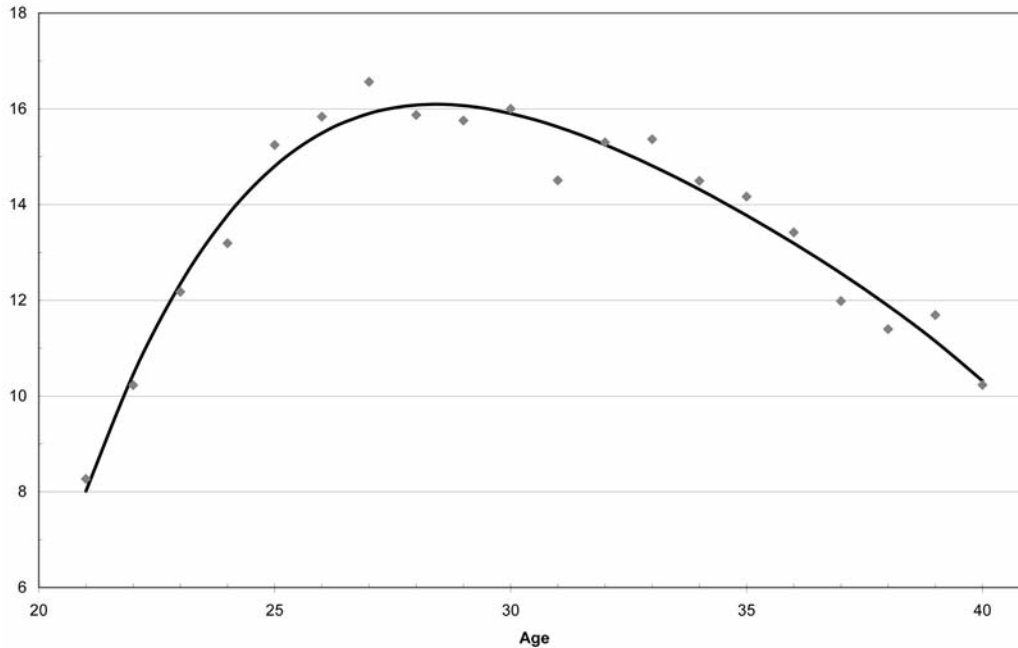
Curiously, Ace notched his best career ERA when he was 26, a year before his winningest season. This presents a conundrum. How could a guy win more games as his ERA started to get worse? For a start, we can speculate that when he was younger he was more likely to get yanked from a game at the first sign of trouble. As he became more "established," he would be left in the game longer, logging more innings, even though his ERA had begun slowly to rise. Credit the "experience factor." The longer he stayed in the game, the higher the probability that he would get the decision. Another possible explanation is pacing. The younger Ace may have given it his all early in the game, sometimes making for a quick exit. The more mature Ace was able to pace his effort and keep going into the later innings.

A pitcher's ERA does not include runs scored owing to fielding errors, yet it is still arguably a statistic that is affected by the general quality of the fielders. A batted ball can fall for a hit or be turned into an out, depending on whether the fielder positions himself correctly or how quickly he reacts. A home run, although impacted by the characteristics of the ballpark, is the pitcher's

fault (neglecting the rarity of the inside-the-park round-tripper). The number of home runs a pitcher gives up per nine innings is a stat that isolates the pitcher's performance from the quality of his team's defense.

Winger's tendency to give up the gopher ball was a bit erratic early in his career, but the general trend line shows it increasing with age. The rate of change is fairly steady in his twenties and then accelerates in his thirties.

Winger posted his highest strikeout ratio in his rookie year. Although his ability to strike out batters bounced around during his career, the trend is for a straight decline over time. No surprise here. Pitchers who rely on velocity get the most strikeouts, and velocity declines with age as joints and muscles stiffen and wear and tear takes its toll.

Control, however, is a completely other kettle of fish. Ace Winger had his best walks ratio at the ripe old age of 33. Perhaps to compensate for his decline in velocity, or maybe because of his improving "feel" for the strike zone, his control kept getting better even as his ERA continued to climb. How could that be? As Ace's numbers show, when you put the ball over the plate, but you're not blowing batters away with the heater, you give up more hits (and, as we have established, more home runs).

Winger's hits ratio began climbing in his mid-twenties and never let up. For about a ten-year span, his walks and hits ratios moved in opposite directions, the former going down while the latter increased, which makes intuitive sense. Throwing more strikes

FIGURE 3. Earned Run Average
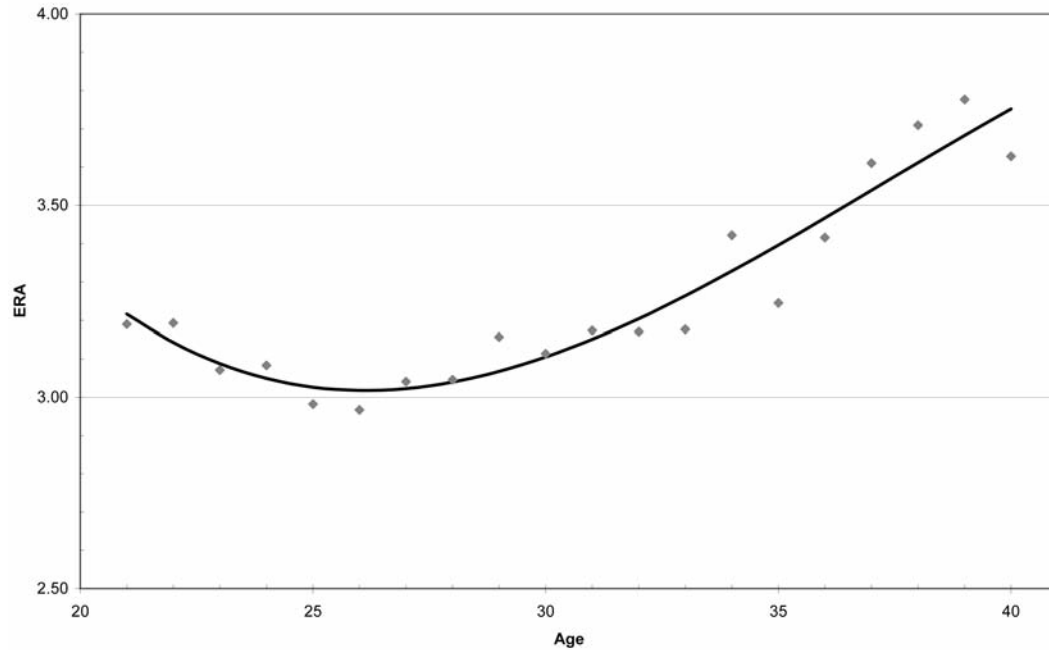
FIGURE 4. Home Runs per 9 Innings
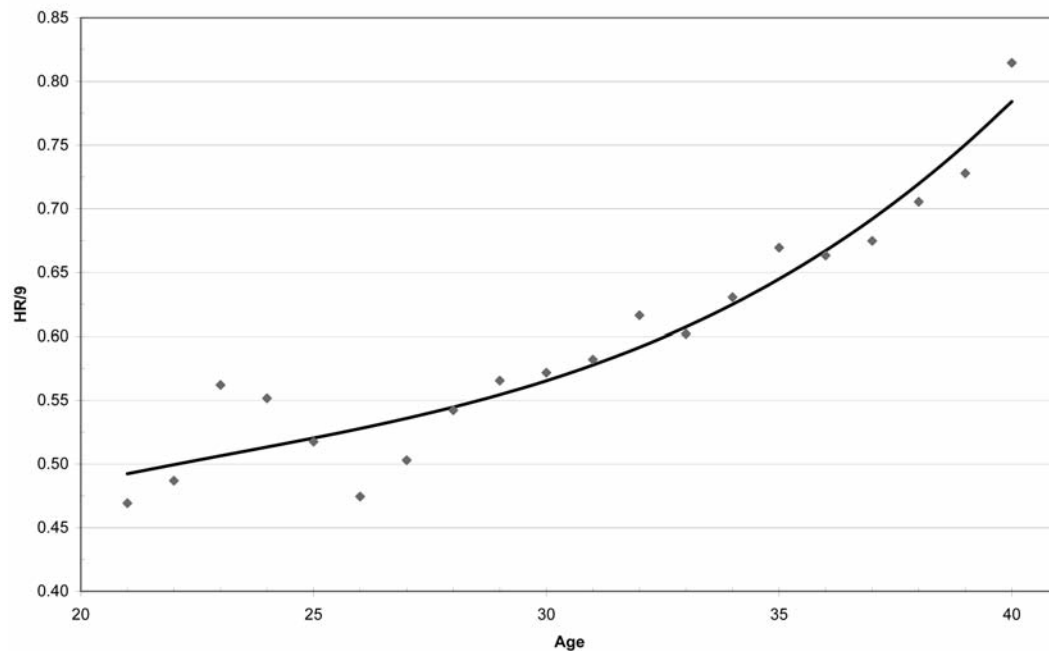
will result in fewer walks, but batters will then swing at more pitches, which in turn will lead to more hits. The combined effects of these two parameters are revealed in his WHIP.

Ace's curve for walks plus hits per innings pitched looks a lot like his ERA curve. The convergence of his combined ability to restrict hits and walks peaked around age 27.

The readers who have stuck with this study so far may be wondering if their memory is slipping. Why haven't they ever heard of this Ace Winger guy, they ask? The reason they won't find Ace in their Baseball Almanacs is that he never existed. He never threw a single pitch. Ace Winger is, in fact, a statistical Frankenstein. He is a composite of the 79 winningest pitchers of the modern era. His numbers as presented here are simply the averages of those from some of the greatest pitchers to play the game. Even though Ace Winger is a fabrication, his statistics are real.

The data sample for this study was taken from the top 100 all-time leaders in wins, minus the 21 who started their careers before 1900 (sorry, Cy Young).

FIGURE 5. Strikeouts per 9-inning Game
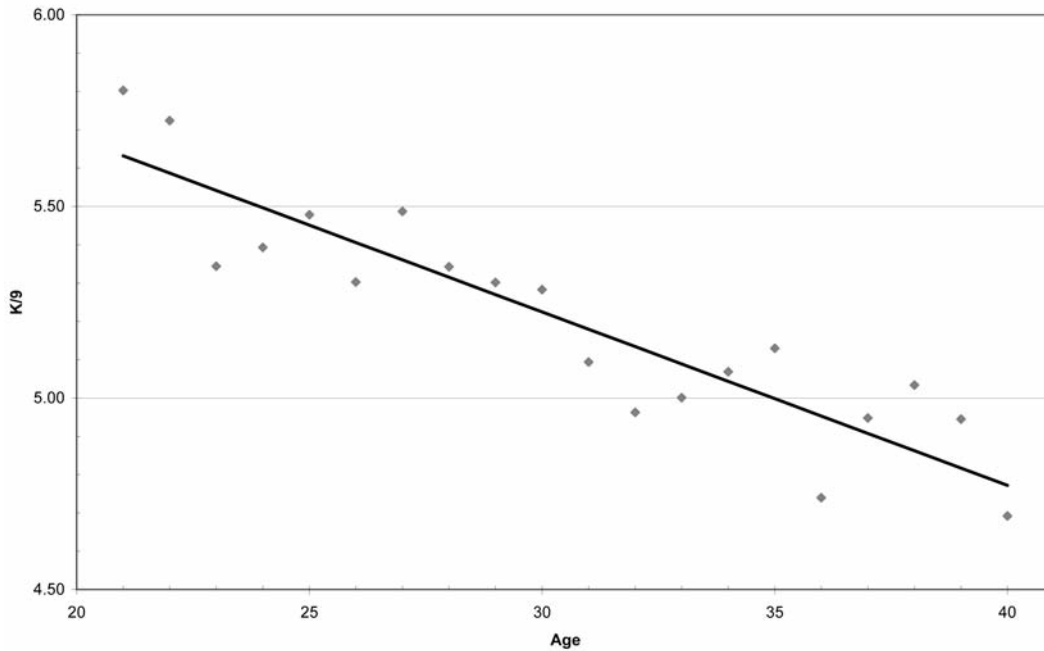
FIGURE 6. Walks per 9-inning Game
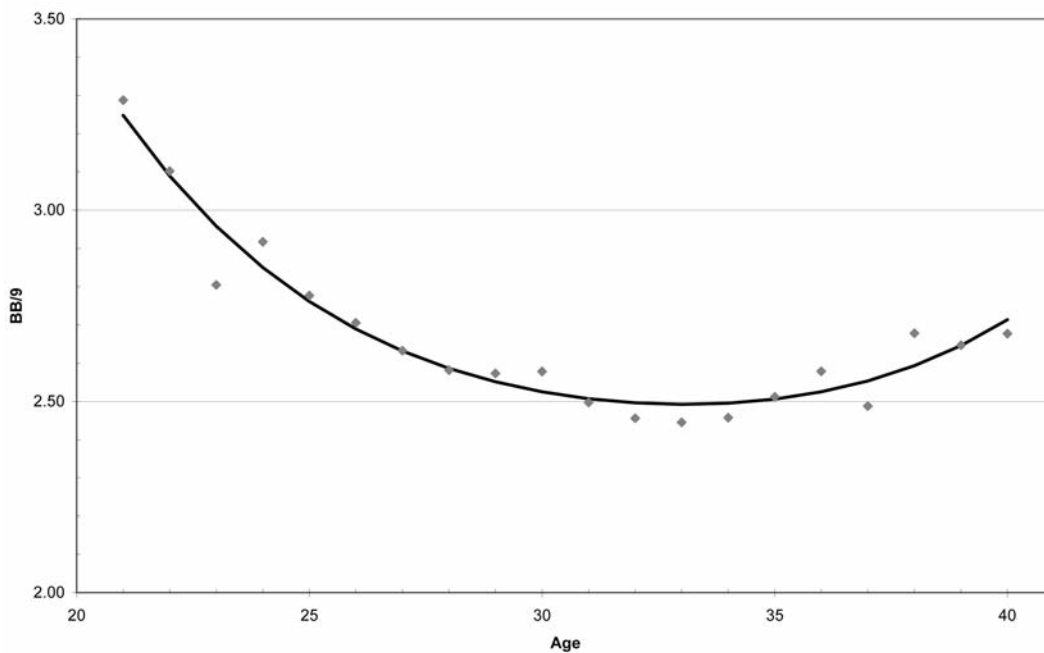
The age range, 21 to 40, was picked because more than half of the 79 in the sample were pitching between those ages. Sticking to numbers compiled during the modern era eliminates a few things that might disrupt the analysis, statistically speaking. Back in the nineteenth century, many of the elite pitchers were putting up really crooked numbers. Check out Will White's 680 innings of service for the 1879 Cincinnati Reds (he pitched in all but four of their games that year). Or Charley Radbourn's 59 wins for the 1884 Providence Grays. Numbers like these don't lend themselves to smooth curve fits.

A couple of arguments can be made against the validity of the data sample used here. Admittedly, 79 is a small number to use when attempting to project future performance, and it is likely the reason for the

FIGURE 7. Hits per 9-inning Game
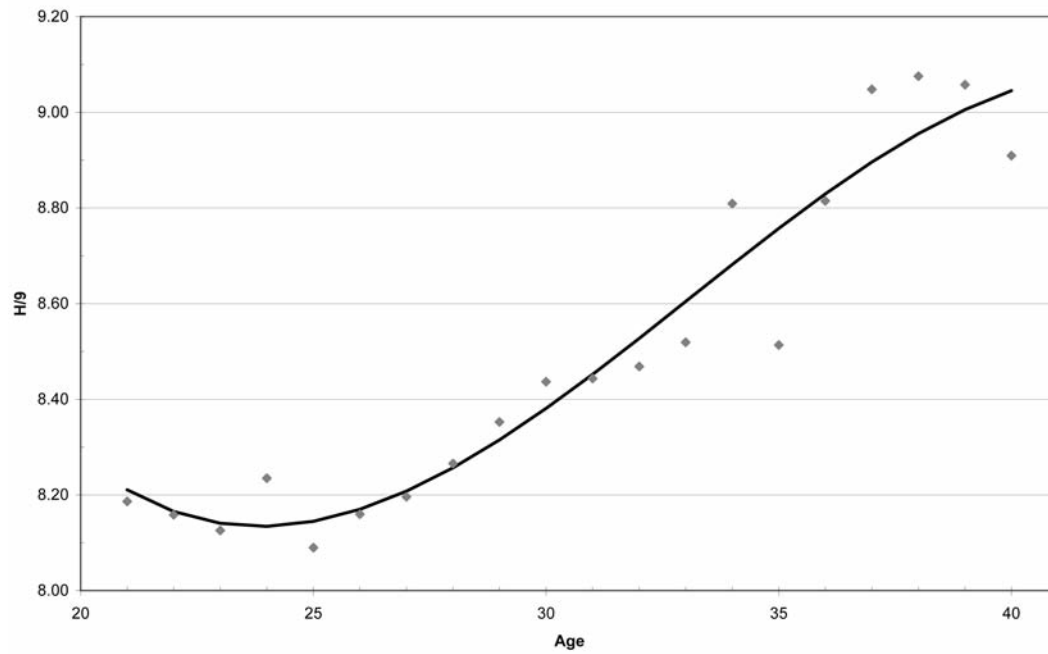
FIGURE 8. Walks and Hits per Inning Pitched
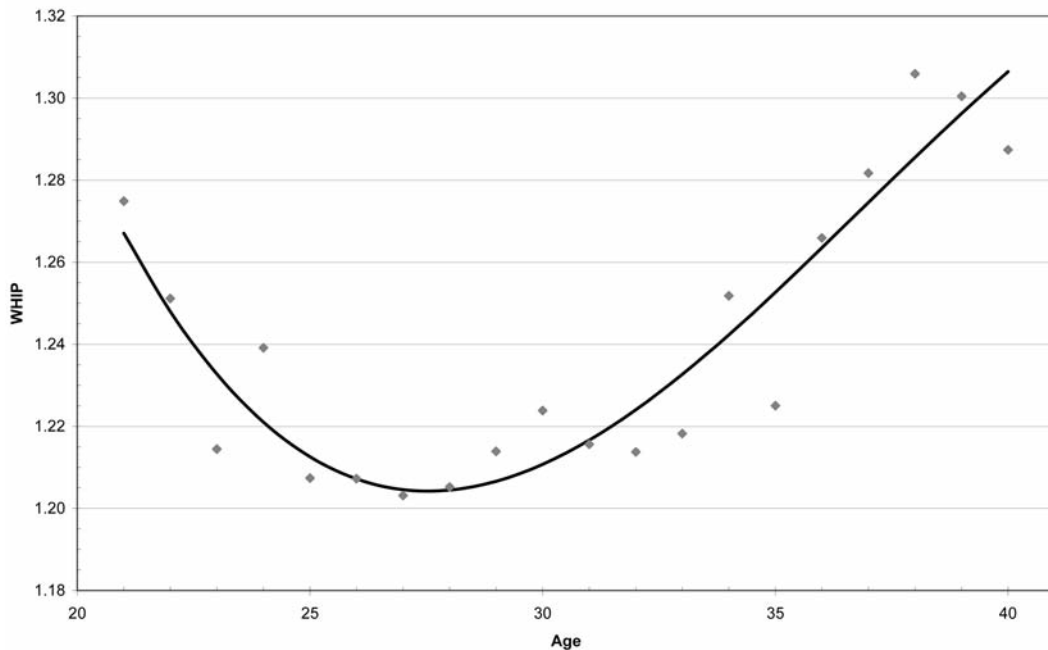
data scatter seen in the graphs. A more comprehensive data sample will alter the curve shapes somewhat, but the essence of the derived conclusions should hold. Further, the choice of historically "elite" pitchers renders this a nonrandom sample. Fair enough. Selecting highly successful pitchers gives us a group of pitchers who enjoyed long careers, thus providing more information on how they aged. A data sample of

"average" pitchers creates difficulties because mediocrities don't have the luxury of pitching into old age. A guy who is barely major-league material at his theoretical peak of 27 won't be around much past 30.

No attempt has been made here to differentiate "power" from "control" pitchers. Making such a distinction could be difficult, especially when you consider how many pitchers successfully transitioned from the

first type to the second. The only selection criterion for inclusion in the sample was the ability to win games.

It is clear, however, that elite pitchers (and, by extension, all pitchers) tend to hit the peak of their powers somewhere in their late twenties. After age 30, there is a steady decline.

There is one criterion that is not included in this study: salary. In today's market, premier pitchers (and even mediocre ones) are the beneficiaries of an upward-sloping salary curve as they pitch well into their thirties.

Why, we may ask, would we pay a player more as his performance declines? It could be the seniority factor, or perhaps the notion that a player's pay is heavily based on his past performance. Regardless, is it better business to sign high-priced free agents in their thirties or to go with cheaper up-and-coming guys in their twenties? I will leave the answer to others..

It seems Ace Winger may have watched his salary grow in his declining years. His agent, Scotty Borax, would have made sure of it. ■

Ted Williams's "Most Embarrassing" Moment

While off-air, with a tape running, Ted Williams once told a television interviewer:

> The most embarrassing thing that ever happened to me was in 1946. We won the pennant, but one night in Washington . . . we got beat that night, 2 to 1—2 to 1. And I hit two triples that night. The only game I ever hit two triples in, I think. And I hit both those triples with nobody out. In Washington. And Washington had two quick-throwing pickoff catchers. Two of them. Evans and Early. And you know what? Talk about embarrassing! I got picked off twice! Nobody out. And you know the second time I just went in. . . . I dove back in and the bag was right there and I wanted to take a big chomp out of it, I was so damn mad. Cronin was the third-base coach. Ha ha ha. Oh, boy!

It proved impossible to find this game through methodical searching. There were no 2–1 games between Washington and Boston in 1946. Evans and Early both played for Washington in 1946, as they had from 1939 through 1942 and in 1948 and 1949. But there were no 2–1 losses in those years either. After spending a couple of hours trying in vain to track this down, I just gave up—but filed away a note to myself on November 5, 2002, that I was still looking for this game in which Williams got picked off twice.

Just over three years later, on Thanksgiving Day in 2005, I was reading in the *Boston Globe* from August 11, 1942—specifically, an account of the doubleheader on August 10 between the Senators and the Sox. There I came across what had to be the day Williams had in mind. Harold Kaese wrote of the Washington fans, "Nothing delighted them more than to see Ted Williams, on third with one out after doubling off the right-field wall in the ninth inning of the second game, picked off base by catcher Jack Early. In the first inning, Earley [*sic*] had picked Williams off first."

So, there were a few errors in Williams's memory. Evans did catch in the first game, but it was in the second game that Williams was picked off twice. Williams had three doubles on the day, but not two triples. Boston had already lost the day's first game. It was 1–0 in favor of Washington, but Ted was on third base with just one out in the ninth. The final was 1–0, Washington—not 2–1, as Ted recalled it, but still a one-run loss for the Red Sox. It would have been a particularly mortifying moment to be picked off for the second time in the same game.

—Bill Nowlin

Bullpen Cy Young Awards
When and Why Do Relievers Win It?

Monte Cely

Major League Baseball marked the fiftieth anniversary of the Cy Young Award in 2006. The award was established in 1956 by Commissioner Ford Frick to honor the best pitcher in major league baseball. The award was named for all-time wins-leader Denton True "Cy" Young, who had died the year before, in 1955. Members of the Baseball Writers Association of America (BBWAA) vote for the award, with two writers per team in each major-league city casting the ballots. Don Newcombe of the Brooklyn Dodgers was the first recipient.[1]

From 1956 through 1966, only a single Cy Young Award winner was named for all of Major League Baseball. Soon after Commissioner Frick retired, the rules were amended so that the award would go to a pitcher from each league. After Denny McLain and Mike Cuellar tied for the AL award in 1969, the rules were further adjusted to allow the BBWAA voters to cast "weighted" votes for first, second, and third places.

It was not until 1974 that a reliever, Mike Marshall of the Los Angeles Dodgers, won the Cy Young Award. Since then, eight more Cy Young Awards have gone to the key man from the bullpen. Through 2006, about 10 percent of all Cy Young Awards (nine of the 92) have been bestowed on the relief ace (see table 1).

TABLE 1.
Nine Relievers Have Won the Cy Young Award (through 2006)

NL		AL	
Mike Marshall	1974	Sparky Lyle	1977
Bruce Sutter	1979	Rollie Fingers *	1981
Steve Bedrosian	1987	Willie Hernandez *	1984
Mark Davis	1989	Dennis Eckersley *	1992
Eric Gagne	2003		

* also won MVP that year

What achievements got them the nod, and why did these nine relievers get selected over a starter? This paper will examine the historical context, key performances and statistics for the Cy Young award winning relievers, compare their achievements to those years' top starters, and attempt to draw conclusions as to what factors led to their selections.

PREVIOUS RESEARCH
Several articles in *The Baseball Research Journal* (*BRJ*) have examined the Cy Young Award and in particular sought to predict which pitchers may have won the award in years before its establishment in 1956. The subject of relief pitchers winning the Cy Young has been touched on, albeit lightly, in some of these earlier research papers.

Lyle Spatz (*BRJ*, 1988) reported the results of a survey conducted by SABR members to determine pre-1967 "winners" of retroactive Cy Young Awards.[2] The only retro Cy Young to be awarded to a reliever in this survey was Jim Konstanty, on the strength of his NL MVP season for the pennant-winning Phillies "Whiz Kids" of 1950. Referring to Willie Hernandez's AL Cy Young win in 1984, Lyle writes that it caused "much controversy, the usual refrain for a Cy Young Award winning relief pitcher. . . . a significant number of fans and sports writers oppose giving the award to a reliever."

Alan and James Kaufman (*BRJ*, 1993) predicted retro Cy Young Award winners by looking at performance criteria and MVP voting.[3] The authors directly address the question "what does it take for a relief pitcher to win the Cy Young Award?" Their conclusions:

> Finishing high in MVP voting among pitchers does not guarantee that a reliever will win the Cy Young Award.
>
> Starters must falter to allow a reliever to win the Cy Young Award. (By "falter," the authors really mean that the top starters did not finish highly in that season's MVP voting.)

Stuart Miller (*BRJ*, 1995) advocated for more emphasis on individual statistics, such as ERA and WHIP, in the selection of the Cy Young Award winner.[4] With respect to relievers, Miller concluded that "their role is so different, they should only compete for the Fireman of the Year Award."

In previous research on the Cy Young Award (*BRJ*, 2007), I compared key individual- and team-oriented performance metrics to determine how often Cy Young Award winners (and their teams) led in the various

statistical categories.[5] I concluded that leadership in wins (credited to the pitcher) and team finish (did the pitcher's team win their division?) were most often indicative of the Cy Young Award winner. The methodology used in that earlier paper did not appear to apply as well to relievers as to starters, and thus was planted the seed for the topic of this article you are now reading.

SIGNIFICANT SEASONS

Here is some historical context for relief pitchers in their rise to prominence and recognition as legitimate candidates for the Cy Young Award:

1950. Jim Konstanty, relief ace of the Whiz Kid Phillies, wins the National League Most Valuable Player Award, the first reliever to be so honored. Konstanty went 16–7 with 22 saves in 74 appearances. Ironically, he lost his only start of the year when, in a 1–0 decision won by the Yankees, he pitched Game 1 of the World Series. All expert polls indicate that, if the Cy Young Award had been in existence, Konstanty would have won it.

1959. Elroy Face, relief ace of the Pittsburgh Pirates, wins 18 games against only 1 loss in 57 appearances. Face's winning percentage of .9474 is the all-time highest for pitchers with more than 15 decisions in a season. He does not get even one vote for the Cy Young Award.

1960. A reliever is named on a sportswriter's ballot for the first time in Cy Young Award voting. Lindy McDaniel of the Cardinals gets a single vote for his efforts as the ace of the Cards' bullpen.

1973. Mike Marshall of the Montreal Expos finishes second in Cy Young voting. "Iron Mike" appears in 92 games (setting the record, since broken, for pitching appearances in a season), winning 14 and leading the NL in saves with 31. However, Marshall can't match Tom Seaver's strong performance for the pennant-winning Mets.

1974. Now playing for the Dodgers, Marshall breaks his own record for most appearances by a pitcher with 106, all in relief. This record still stands. Marshall also set a record, since equaled, for most consecutive game appearances as a reliever—13. He wins the first Cy Young awarded to a reliever, beating out teammate and 20-game winner Andy Messersmith.

1977. Sparky Lyle becomes the first reliever to win the Cy Young in the American League. Although he

pitched significantly fewer innings than Marshall (137 versus Marshall's 208.3), he still pitched almost two innings per appearance and led the AL with 72 appearances. Two AL starters, Jim Palmer and Nolan Ryan, split the voting behind Lyle. Neither played for a division winner. None of the starters for the East Division–winning Yankees were truly overwhelming; Torrez led with 17 wins (14 after coming from Oakland early in the season), Figueroa and Guidry had 16 each, Gullet 14. Dennis Leonard of the Royals, champions of the Western Division, finished with 20 wins but in fourth place in the voting, one vote behind Ryan. Lyle never started a major-league game.

1979. Bruce Sutter wins the NL Cy Young. Sutter is considered the first of the "pure closers" to win the award. He is also known as the pitcher that brought the split-fingered fastball to prominence. Sutter logged 110 strikeouts in 101⅓ innings across 62 appearances and led the NL with 37 saves. He continued the trend of a

Mike Marshall, who in 1974 became the first reliever to win the Cy Young Award, after pitching 208⅓ innings in 106 games and going 15–12 with an ERA of 2.42. He finished third that year in voting for the National League MVP Award.

reduced number of relief innings pitched, appearing exclusively in the later innings of a game. Sutter narrowly won the Cy Young, collecting 72 points and 10 first-place votes versus 66 points and 9 first-place votes for Joe Niekro of the Astros. Niekro and his teammate J. R. Richard, also of the Astros' rotation, split much of the remainder of the vote, as Richard finished third. Niekro tied for the NL lead with 21 wins, while Richard led in ERA and strikeouts for second-place Houston. On the division winners, Tom Seaver led the Reds with 16 wins, and John Candelaria led the Pirates with 14.

1981. This was the infamous "split season" brought on by a midyear player strike, which lasted from June 12 through August 9 and blew a hole in the heart of the baseball season. Winners were declared for each half of the season, creating the possibility of up to eight playoff teams. Rollie Fingers not only captured the AL Cy Young but also became the first relief pitcher ever to win both a Cy Young and an MVP Award. Fingers's margin of victory over starter Steve McCatty of the A's in the Cy Young voting (49 percent advantage in points and a margin of 16 [22 to 6] first-place votes) was the largest up to that time for a reliever over a starter. Although McCatty "led" the AL in wins, it was only 14, good for a four-way tie. Fingers clearly outdistanced the field in saves, with 28 over Goose Gossage's 20. Along with his 6 wins, Fingers figured in 34 of the Brewers' 62 wins. Fingers's stellar 1.04 ERA this sea-

Dennis Eckersley, winner of the American League Cy Young and MVP Awards in 1992, when he saved 51 games, went 7–1, and posted an ERA of 1.91.

son is the lowest ever posted by a Cy Young Award winner (if you waive the innings-pitched requirement for consideration in league leadership).

1984. Relievers finished first and second in AL Cy Young voting this year. Willie Hernandez of the Tigers, the Eastern Division champions, took the Cy Young along with the American League MVP. Dan Quisenberry of the Royals, the Western Division champions, finished second in the Cy Young voting. Hernandez appeared in a major- league leading 80 games for the Tigers, while Quisenberry led the AL with 44 saves. The Tigers won 104 games, winning the East by 15 games and winning 20 more games than did the Royals in the West. Although the Tigers had a strong season, none of their starters greatly outpaced the others—Jack Morris won 19, Dan Petry 18, and Milt Wilcox 17. Petry's 3.24 ERA, the lowest among the Tigers' starters, ranked only eleventh in the league among qualifiers. Hernandez's ERA was 1.92 in 140⅓ innings; moreover, he had 9 wins.

1985. Hoyt Wilhelm became the first reliever elected to the Hall of Fame. Wilhelm pitched for 21 seasons (1952 to 1972) and was considered the greatest reliever of his era. Wilhelm never won a Cy Young Award, his prime years having been in the era of only one award for both leagues and when the bias against considering relievers for the award was firmer. Since Wilhelm's election, he has been joined in the Cooperstown bullpen by Rollie Fingers (class of 1992), Dennis Eckersley (2004), Bruce Sutter (2006), and Goose Gossage (2008).[6]

1987. Steve Bedrosian of the Phillies won the NL Cy Young by the smallest voting margin to date (4 percent over Rick Sutcliffe of the Cubs) of any reliever to receive the award. Although he polled the most total votes and the most first-place votes, his first-place votes were only 9 of 24. None of the division-winning teams had any dominating starters. Mike LaCoss and Rick Reuschel of the Giants, winners of the Western Division, had 13 wins each, and Reuschel tallied only 5 of those after being acquired midseason by the Giants. Danny Cox, Bob Forsch, and Greg Mathews of the Cardinals, winners of the Eastern Division, had only 11 wins each. Bedrosian figured in 45 (40 saves plus 5 wins) of the Phillies' 80 victories, and his ERA of 2.83 bested all NL starters except for league-leader Nolan Ryan (2.76).

1989. Mark Davis won the NL Cy Young over starter Mike Scott of the Astros. Davis saved an NL-leading

44 games and won 4, figuring in 48 of the 89 wins for the Padres, who finished second. Davis with his 1.85 ERA bested all starting pitchers of record in the NL. For the third-place Astros, Scott led the league with 20 wins, but he had 10 losses and finished seventeenth in ERA (3.10) and a distant second in voting for the Cy Young. (Davis received 19 of 24 first-place votes.) The Cubs, winners of the NL East, had three of the NL's winningest pitchers—Greg Maddux with 19, Mike Bielecki with 18, and Rick Sutcliffe with 16. For the Giants, winners of the NL West, Rick Reuschel led the club with 17 wins (good for fifth place in the league), and Scott Garrelts topped the NL in ERA (2.28) and won 14.

1992. Dennis Eckersley of the A's won the AL Cy Young over starter Jack McDowell of the White Sox. Eckersley had a league-leading 51 saves and, added to his 7 wins, figured in 58 of the Athletics' 96 wins. Eckersley's 1.91 ERA was a full half-run better than that of the top AL starter (Clemens at 2.41), and his WHIP was below 1. Eckersley also ran away with the AL

Eric Gagne, winner of the National League Cy Young Award in what up to now has been his career year, 2003, when he saved 55 games and struck out 137 batters in 82.3 innings. His ERA was 1.20.

MVP vote, taking 15 of the 28 first-place votes and outpacing Kirby Puckett with an overall vote total of 306–209. Of the starters for the A's, winners of the AL West, Mike Moore was 17–12 and Ron Darling was 15–10. Jack Morris of the Eastern Division–winning Blue Jays was 21–6 but placed out of the top 25 in ERA at 4.04, trailing several starters on his own staff.

1998. Trevor Hoffman of the Padres receives the most first-place votes for the NL Cy Young Award but finishes second to Tom Glavine in overall total points. Hoffman received 13 first-place votes to Glavine's 11. Glavine's overall total of 99 points bested Hoffman's 88.

2003. Eric Gagne of the Dodgers won the NL Cy Young, beating out starter Jason Schmidt of the Giants. Gagne set a major-league record by converting 55 consecutive saves during the season. He posted a 1.20 ERA, allowing only 37 hits and 20 walks and striking out 137 in $82\frac{1}{3}$ innings for the second-place Dodgers. Gagne received 28 of 32 first-place votes in the widest margin for an NL reliever who has won the Cy Young. Gagne's 6.23 walk plus hits per 9 innings is the lowest ever for a Cy Young Award winner.

STATISTICAL ANALYSES AND DISCUSSION

Relievers have won the Cy Young Award nine times and nine times have finished second (see appendix for details). On one occasion, in 1984 in the AL, relievers finished first and second in the Cy Young voting. And so, on eight occasions a starter finished first and a reliever second and on another eight occurrences a reliever finished first and a starter second. With respect to some key performance indicators (from appendix), here are some comparisons for those 16 seasons:

TABLE 2. Key Comparative Data Summarized from Appendix

	Reliever Is First for CY, Starter Second (n=8*)	Starter Is First for CY, Reliever Second (n=8*)
Reliever leads league in saves:	7	7
Starter leads league in wins:	6	6
Reliever's team finishes first	4	5
Starter's team finishes first	3	6
Reliever's ERA is less than starter's	8	7
Reliever's WHIP is less than starter's	6	6

* 1984 AL season is excluded (starter did not finish first or second)

There appear to be no mano a mano same-season comparative-performance metrics that dictate when a reliever wins the Cy Young Award as opposed to when

a starter edges out the reliever who got the most points. With respect to ratio statistics, such as ERA and WHIP, the reliever appears to perform better regardless of whether or not he wins the Cy Young, although much of that may be explained by relievers pitching far fewer innings than do starters. It's probably a necessary condition but not a sufficient condition that, to contend seriously for the Cy Young, a reliever have a superior ERA. It also appears that a starter's chances are diluted when he does not pitch for a division-winning team.

Historically, the relievers' Cy Young Award wins are concentrated in the 1970s and 1980s:

TABLE 3. The Cy Young Award to Relievers

By Decade		By Cluster	
1956–69	0	1956–73 (18 seasons)	0
1970–79	3	1974–92 (19 seasons)	8
1980–89	4	1993–2006 (14 seasons)	1
1990–99	1		
2000–6	1		

This historic trend coincides with the evolving role and prominence of the relief pitcher as well as with the transition from a four-man to a five-man starting pitching rotation. The advent of a Cy Young Award in both leagues in 1967 also helped improve the chances that a reliever could win the award. Conversely, the ascendancy of middle relievers and setup men in recent years has probably reduced the chances for relievers to win the Cy Young Award in the future.

CONCLUSIONS

So, when do relievers win the Cy Young Award, and why?

Although Jim Konstanty of the 1950 Phillies probably would have won a Cy Young if the award had been in existence then, since its advent in 1956 the following are key events and trends:

The table began to be set for relievers in 1967, when Major League Baseball started awarding a Cy Young to pitchers in each league. As relief pitching (especially "closing") became more prominent as a specialty and something clearly distinct from starting pitching, recognition for relievers gradually began to be registered in Cy Young voting. Concurrently, starting pitchers received fewer starts with the advent of the five-man pitching rotation, yielding fewer wins and fewer innings pitched.

From 1974 to 1992, relievers won eight Cy Young Awards. Three of these relief aces also won league MVP awards (all in the American League). Before 1974, no relievers won the Cy Young Award, and since 1992 only one reliever has won.

In reviewing the historical and statistical data, we can see that a reliever may win the Cy Young Award when the following conditions exist.

The reliever has superior "rate" statistics (especially ERA, and also WHIP) when compared to those of the contending starters and one or more of the following also occurs:

1. There is no dominant starter in the league or no clearly superior "ace" on the staff of the contending teams.

2. The reliever has a record-setting season.

3. External forces (strike, shortened season, split season, etc.) "muddy" the results among the starters, rendering the traditional "yardsticks" (20 wins, 200 innings pitched, 200 strikeouts) less meaningful.

4. Pitching is in a time of transition. The advent of the five-man rotation coupled with the advent of the specialized relief "closer" caused expectations for starters to change. ∎

Notes

1. *Baseball Almanac,* www.baseball-almanac.com.
2. Lyle Spatz, "Retroactive Cy Young Awards," *Baseball Research Journal* 17 (1988): 2–5.
3. Alan S. Kaufman and James C. Kaufman, "Another Look at Hypothetical Cy Young Award Winners," *Baseball Research Journal* 22 (1993): 65–70.
4. Stuart Miller, "How Voters Decide the Cy Young Award," *Baseball Research Journal* 24 (1995): 157–59.
5. Monte Cely, "The Cy Young Award, Individual or Team Recognition?" *Baseball Research Journal* 35 (2007): 48–53.
6. National Baseball Hall of Fame, www.baseballhalloffame.org.
7. Sources and clarifications for the statistical table presented in appendix: Statistics are from the *Baseball Almanac* website, unless noted below.

   For WHIP and innings pitched, statistics and rankings were taken from Baseball Reference, www.baseball-reference.com.

   Cy Young voting was taken from the Baseball Reference website. Various statistics for the 1981 and 1994 seasons may seem low because of work stoppages.

Acknowlegments

APPENDIX

RELIEVERS WIN THE CY YOUNG AWARD (9)

National League | **Individual Statistics** | **Team Statistics**

Year	Name	First-place votes	Points	CY margin	Team	ERA	ERA rank	K	K rank	W+H per 9 IP (WHIP x 9)	WHIP x 9 rank	IP	IP rank	Wins	Losses	Win%	Win rank	Win % rank	Saves	Team wins	Team finish
74	**Mike Marshall**	17	96	45%	Dodgers	2.42	4	143	16	10.67	z	208.3	z	15	12	0.556	12	21	21	102	1
	Andy Messersmith	5	66		Dodgers	2.59	5	221	2	**9.88**	**1**	292.3	2	20	6	**0.769**	**1**	**1**	0	102	1
79	**Bruce Sutter**	10	72	9%	Cubs	2.22	y	110	23	8.79	y	101.3	z	6	6	0.500	x	x	37	80	5
	Joe Niekro	9	66		Astros	3.00	5	119	3	11.20	z	263.7	3	21	11	0.656	1	4	0	89	2
	JR Richard	4	41		Astros	**2.71**	**1**	**313**	**1**	9.79	2	292.3	2	18	13	0.581	3	15	0	89	2
87	**Steve Bedrosian**	9	57	4%	Phillies	2.83	y	74	x	10.82	y	89.0	z	5	3	0.625	x	x	40	80	5
	Rick Sutcliffe	4	55		Cubs	3.68	13	174	6	12.58	z	237.3	2	18	10	0.643	1	3	0	76	6
	Rick Reuschel	8	54		Giants	3.09	4	107	x	**9.87**	**1**	227.0	2	13	9	0.591	9	9	0	90	1
89	**Mark Davis**	19	107	65%	Padres	1.85	y	92	x	9.42	y	92.7	z	4	3	0.571	x	x	44	89	2
	Mike Scott	4	65		Astros	3.10	17	172	8	9.51	3	229.0	z	20	10	0.667	1	6	0	86	3
03	**Eric Gagne**	28	146	100%	Dodgers	1.20	y	137	x	6.23	y	82.3	z	2	3	0.400	x	x	55	85	2
	Jason Schmidt	2	73		Giants	**2.34**	**1**	208	4	**8.58**	**1**	207.7	z	17	5	**0.773**	4	**1**	0	100	1

American League

Year	Name	First-place votes	Points	CY margin	Team	ERA	ERA rank	K	K rank	W+H per 9 IP (WHIP x 9)	WHIP x 9 rank	IP	IP rank	Wins	Losses	Win%	Win rank	Win % rank	Saves	Team wins	Team finish
1977	**Sparky Lyle**	9	56.5	18%	Yankees	2.17	y	68	x	10.77	z	137.0	z	13	5	0.722	25	z	26	100	1
	Jim Palmer	6	48		Orioles	2.91	5	193	4	10.22	z	**319.0**	**1**	20	11	0.645	1	7	0	97	2
	Nolan Ryan	6	46		Angels	2.77	3	**341**	**1**	12.10	z	299.0	3	19	16	0.543	4	23	0	74	5
1981	**Rollie Fingers**	22	126	49%	Brewers	1.04	y	61	x	7.85	z	78.0	z	6	3	0.667	x	x	28	62	1
	Steve McCatty	6	84.5		Athletics	**2.33**	**1**	91	9	9.75	4	185.7	4	14	7	0.667	1	6	0	64	1
1984	**Willie Hernandez**	12	88	24%	Tigers	1.92	y	112	x	8.47	y	140.3	z	9	3	0.750	x	x	32	104	1
	Dan Quisenberry	9	71		Royals	2.64	x	41	x	9.25	y	129.3	z	6	3	0.667	x	x	44	84	1
	Bert Blyleven	4	45		Indians	2.87	3	170	4	10.22	2	245.0	z	19	7	0.731	2	2	0	75	6
1992	**Dennis Eckersley**	19	107	110%	Athletics	1.91	y	93	x	8.22	y	80.0	z	7	1	0.875	x	z	51	96	1
	Jack McDowell	2	51		White Sox	3.18	8	178	5	11.12	z	260.7	3	20	10	0.667	3	5	0	86	3

RELIEVERS FINISH SECOND IN CY YOUNG AWARD VOTING (9)

National League | **Individual Statistics** | **Team Statistics**

Year	Name	First-place votes	Points	CY margin	Team	ERA	ERA rank	K	K rank	W+H per 9 IP (WHIP x 9)	WHIP x 9 rank	IP	IP rank	Wins	Losses	Win%	Win rank	Win % rank	Saves	Team wins	Team finish
1973	Tom Seaver	10	71	31%	Mets	**2.08**	**1**	**251**	**1**	8.78	1	290.0	3	19	10	0.655	2	4	0	82	1
	Mike Marshall	9	54		Expos	2.66	4	124	x	11.97	z	179.0	z	14	11	0.560	13	21	31	79	4
1991	Tom Glavine	19	110	83%	Braves	2.55	3	192	3	9.86	3	246.7	2	20	11	0.645	1	7	0	94	1
	Lee Smith	4	60		Cardinals	2.34	y	67	x	10.23	y	73.0	x	6	3	0.667	x	y	47	84	2
1998	Tom Glavine	11	99	13%	Braves	2.47	4	157	22	10.83	z	229.3	z	20	6	0.769	1	2	0	106	1
	Trevor Hoffman	13	88		Padres	1.48	y	86	x	7.64	y	73.0	z	4	2	0.667	x	y	53	98	1
2006	Brandon Webb	15	103	34%	Diamondbacks	3.10	3	178	10	10.19	2	235.0	2	16	8	0.667	1	4	0	76	4
	Trevor Hoffman	12	77		Padres	2.14	v	50	x	8.71	v	63.0	z	0	2	0.000	x	v	46	88	1

American League

Year	Name	First-place votes	Points	CY margin	Team	ERA	ERA rank	K	K rank	W+H per 9 IP (WHIP x 9)	WHIP x 9 rank	IP	IP rank	Wins	Losses	Win%	Win rank	Win % rank	Saves	Team wins	Team finish
1983	LaMarr Hoyt	17	116	43%	White Sox	3.66	17	148	8	**9.22**	**1**	260.7	4	24	10	0.706	1	4	0	99	1
	Dan Quisenberry	9	81		Royals	1.94	y	48	x	8.35	y	139.0	z	5	3	0.625	x	y	45	79	2
1984	see above - Hernandez (1) Quisenberry (2)																				
1988	Frank Viola	27	128	146%	Twins	2.64	3	193	3	10.22	5	255.3	z	24	7	**0.774**	1	1	0	91	2
	Dennis Eckersley	1	52		Athletics	2.35	y	70	x	7.80	y	72.7	z	4	2	0.667	x	y	45	104	1
1995	Randy Johnson	26	136	152%	Mariners	**2.48**	**1**	**294**	**1**	9.41	1	214.3	4	18	2	**0.900**	2	1	0	79	1
	Jose Mesa	2	54		Indians	1.12	y	58	x	9.28	y	64.0	z	3	0	1.000	x	y	46	100	1
2005	Bartolo Colon	17	118	74%	Angels	3.48	8	157	8	10.43	3	222.7	7	21	8	0.724	1	4	0	95	1
	Mariano Rivera	8	68		Yankees	1.38	y	80	x	7.81	y	78.3	z	7	4	0.636	x	y	43	95	1

Notes

Points

1956–69: Each designated writer had one vote, which counted for one point.

1970–present: Each designated writer has three votes. His first-place vote counts for 5 points; second place, 3 points; third place, 1 point.

"CY margin" is defined as ((winner's Cy young voting points)/(runner-up's Cy Young voting points)) -1.

Fractional innings

0.3 = 1/3 inning; 0.7 = 2/3 inning.

x–Pitcher did not finish in top 25 in this statistical category

y–Relief pitcher did not qualify for statistical leadership (did not pitch enough innings)

z–Pitcher did not finish in top 5 in this statistical category

A Farewell to Arms

The Major Leagues in 1968 and the Transition to a New Modern Era

Paul Hensler

By any measure 1968 was a year of upheaval. Assassinations, riots, protests, and the decision by the incumbent commander in chief to forgo a reelection bid all pointed to the unrest and instability that wracked the nation, and the bloodiest year of fighting in Vietnam did nothing to soothe the collective angst. The national pastime provided a much needed diversion from the swirling political and social turmoil during this period but was undergoing a transmogrification of its own. Throughout much of the twentieth century, Major League Baseball's appeal to fans came from the glamour of offensive production, whether it be one swing of the bat—as with Bobby Thomson's "shot heard 'round the world" in 1951—or season-long and career-long feats, such as Babe Ruth's and Hank Aaron's home runs and Pete Rose's record 4,256 career hits. Just as good soldiers run to the sound of the guns, baseball devotees run to the crack of the bat.

The American League experienced a small surge in offensive output after its expansion to ten teams in 1961, but the National League experienced a slight decrease in offense when it expanded to ten teams the following year. In both instances, the first post-expansion season in each league marked the high-water mark of league batting averages until the next round of expansion in 1969. National League offensive production wavered through the mid-1960s, and in 1966 it began a three-year downward trend, with a corresponding decline in league earned-run averages.

However, the figures for the American League show no such dips and rises but instead show a virtual straight-line decline in batting averages, run production, and ERA beginning in 1961 and continuing for the next seven years. Season totals for 1963 and 1964 were uncannily similar, but the general trend over the next four seasons was unmistakable: The drop in offensive output in both leagues indicated that pitching strength had gained momentum with each passing year, especially in the American League.

All of which leads to 1968, dubbed "the year of the pitcher," when batting averages, hits, runs, and earned-run averages in both leagues reached low points and the season was marked by remarkable individual pitching performances.

- Three pitchers threw more than 40 consecutive scoreless innings. With his streak of 58⅔ scoreless innings, which spanned six consecutive shutouts, Don Drysdale broke the 55-year-old record held by Walter Johnson. Bob Gibson pitched 48⅔ consecutive scoreless innings, Luis Tiant 42.

- Gibson posted an ERA of 1.12, a record that still stands among qualifiers in the live-ball era. This mark had been surpassed by only three other pitchers, all of them before 1915.

- Denny McLain won 31 games to post the first 30-win season since 1934, when Dizzy Dean went 30–7 for the St. Louis Cardinals. Given the five-man rotation that is now the rule, it may also be the last time a pitcher wins 30 games.

During spring training in 1968, Major League Baseball made an attempt to remove a clandestine weapon from the repertoire of some pitchers. Officials stiffened the penalties for use of the spitball, which had been outlawed in 1920. But over the ensuing decades many pitchers continued to throw it because "enforcement of the [existing] rule has generally been lax."[1] In 1968, the pitcher most known for throwing the spitter, or at least for being suspected of throwing it, was Gaylord Perry of the Giants. John Wyatt used Preparation H as his foreign substance of choice when loading up the ball to make his pitches dance and dart.

But more than illegal pitches were working against hitters of the era. By late May 1968, only six American League batters were hitting over .300, and fewer than ten in the National League. Writing for the *New York Times* in mid-June, Rex Lardner observed that Major League Baseball was reaching the point where a "'big inning' occurs when a team scores once."[2] If one game is to be singled out as emblematic of the dearth of run-scoring, it would have to be the contest between the New York Mets and Houston Astros on April 15, 1968. It came to a merciful conclusion in the 24th inning when the Astros scored the game's only run, on an error by the Mets shortstop.

Yankees manager Ralph Houk—whose staff posted a team ERA of 2.79, fifth in the league and 0.13 off the
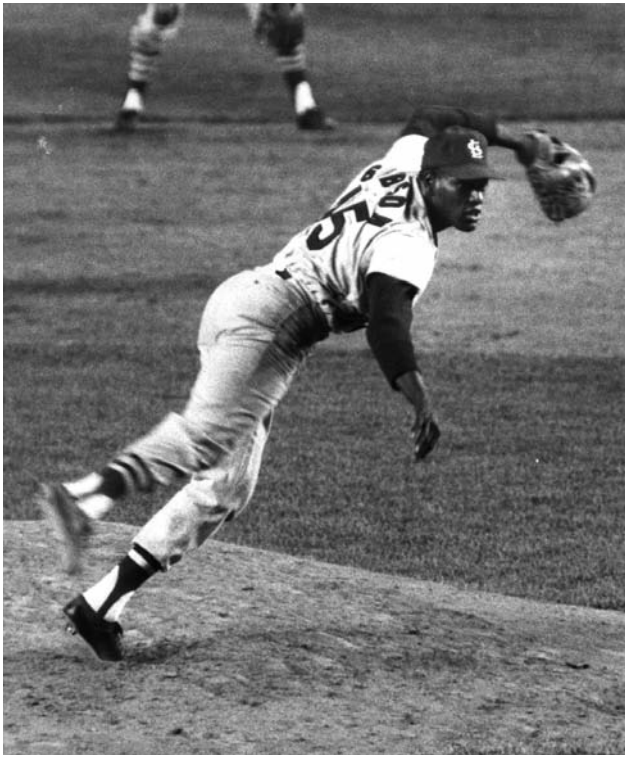
In 1968, "the year of the pitcher," Bob Gibson posted astonishing numbers—28 complete games, 304⅔ innings, 268 strikeouts, an ERA of 1.12. He won the National League Cy Young and MVP Awards.

league-leading Orioles and Indians—credited improved instruction at the minor-league level, which allowed pitchers to arrive in the big leagues better prepared to face opposing hitters. "Now [a pitcher] comes to the majors not only young and able to throw hard," Houk noted, "but he's smart and he's got control."[3] Actually, by the late 1960s pitching coaches in the minors were generally in short supply, and Houk may have been implying that minor-league hitting instructors in the minors were not up to par.

Adding to the hitter's plight was the increase in types of pitches a pitcher might have in his arsenal. In earlier years, a good pitcher could make do with a fastball and a curveball, but by the 1960s sinkers, sliders, and changeups had become common. "Facing two pitches, you could guess right half the time," American League umpire Cal Hubbard observed. "With five, you don't stand a chance."[4]

And as the number of televised games increased, so too did the opportunity for pitchers to observe the competition across the league. When action was telecast from a center-field camera, the pitcher at home could view batters from the same perspective he would when he was on the mound, enabling him to note their strengths, weaknesses, and habits.

By the end of the 1968 season, the damage to

major-league batting was clear. In addition to the feats of Drysdale, Gibson, and McLain, the Giants' high-kicking Juan Marichal threw 30 complete games en route to a National League–best 26–9 record, while only three hitters in all of MLB drove in more than 100 runs. Carl Yastrzemski of the Boston Red Sox led the American League in batting with a paltry .301 average—actually, .300.5 after an 0-for-5 game in the season finale—the lowest average ever to lead the league. In each league the Most Valuable Player award went to a pitcher—to Gibson and McLain, both of whom were also unanimous choices for the Cy Young Award in their respective leagues.

On the same day that Gibson's MVP Award was announced, the Los Angeles Dodgers unveiled plans to shorten the distance from home plate to the outfield fences at Dodger Stadium by 10 feet "as [an] aid to hitters."[5] Sportswriter Leonard Koppett doubted whether this measure would help batters because "the main problem—making contact between ball and bat—remains."[6] Whereas the step taken by the Dodgers would affect play at Dodger Stadium, the MLB rules committee was formulating a proposal that would impact every player on every team.

Much maligned as feckless in his role as commissioner, William Eckert announced a set of rules changes about two weeks before his forced resignation following the winter meetings in San Francisco in December 1968. The most notable change was that the height of the pitcher's mound was reduced from 15 inches to 10. In consequence, as pitchers would soon experience, their lead foot would hit the dirt sooner in their delivery. As the table on page 104 suggests, by the early 1970s pitchers on the whole had begun to make the necessary adjustments to the new mound height. In addition to the lowering of the mound, the strike zone would be reduced—it would now extend, instead of from the shoulders to the knees, from the armpits to the tops of the knees.

The effectiveness of these two changes was reflected in the league batting averages, ERAs, and run production for the 1969 season. The impact was greater on the American League, where the composite batting average jumped 16 points, from a record-low .230 to .246. The rise in the National League was more modest, from .243 to .250. ERAs suffered significantly, increasing more than 0.6 runs in both leagues, from 2.98 to 3.62 in the AL and from 2.99 to 3.59 in the NL. Run production, seen as key to the objective of generating fan interest, soared, as the average per team increased by 100 runs per team in the NL and 110 per team in the AL.

At the end of the 1968 season, Major League Baseball was at a crossroads, its commissioner having been forced to resign with three years still left on his contract. Players were demanding greater leverage at the bargaining table, and Curt Flood in particular was directly challenging the reserve clause. Baseball's status as the national pastime was in question as sports fans in increasing numbers turned their attention to the reconfigured National Football League.

Several developments in addition to increased scoring would affect the overall condition of Major League Baseball as it looked to make adjustments to enlarge its fan base. Through expansion of both leagues in 1969, MLB was able to return big-league ball to Kansas City, whose Athletics were moved by Charlie Finley after the 1967 season, and to bring big-league ball to three cities for the first time—to Seattle in the AL and to Montreal and San Diego in the NL. The two new franchises on the West Coast gave the four teams already in California more competition in their own region.

In 1968, Dick Williams was in his second season as major-league manager with Boston, and halfway through the season Earl Weaver made his debut with the Orioles. Billy Martin took over as manager for the Twins in 1969, and Sparky Anderson for the Reds in 1970. These dynamic young managers forged powerful teams that brought championship baseball to Oakland, Baltimore, Cincinnati, and New York over the ensuing decade. Especially in the case of the American League, several teams vied for supremacy after the demise of the Yankee dynasty in 1965 and gave hope to fans loyal to teams all over the map.

Bowie Kuhn, the 42-year-old Wall Street lawyer who succeeded Eckert as commissioner, left his mark on baseball in the 1970s, during which the sport grew rapidly, the conflict between owners and the players' union intensified, and, eventually the era of free agency was ushered in. Kuhn was criticized for his "best interest of baseball" stance, and a successor would say of him that "his judgment was not sound," although "his devotion to baseball was genuine."[7] His contributions to the game were significant. He returned voting for the All-Star game to the fans, approved the first night games (1971) for a World Series, and oversaw the expansion of the American League in 1977. Taken together, these developments increased the game's exposure and served to broaden its reach into the sports market.

One major change that was proposed actually before 1968 and then shelved at the winter meetings in December involved a "wild-card pinch-hitter for pitchers," which in 1973 became the experimental designated

In the American League in 1968, Denny McLain matched Bob Gibson in complete games (28), bested him in innings pitched (336) and strikeouts (280) but fell short of him in ERA (1.96). McLain won 31 games and, like Gibson, his league's Cy Young and MVP Awards. The two aces met that October in the World Series.

hitter in the American League and remains the rule there.[8] After the brief spike in run production in the AL following the 1968 rule changes, it declined again, causing critics of the designated hitter to take a second look.

The 1968 season marked the end of an era in which baseball for decades had changed only incrementally. It was the year that Mickey Mantle took his last swing. Astroturf was soon to be installed in the new multi-purpose stadiums being built in Philadelphia, Pittsburgh, and Cincinnati. Before long, free agency would result in player salaries—and team payrolls—that exceeded the expectations of players, owners, and fans alike. With the expansion of the American and National Leagues to twelve teams in 1969, MLB, following the example of the NFL and NBA, doubled the number of races by dividing the NL and AL into an Eastern and a Western Division and scheduling a post-season playoff to determine the league champion. The New York Mets, the first world champions under the new system, made a storybook run that year, rising from ninth place the year before, surging in August and September to catch and then pull ahead of the

Cubs, and then beating the heavily favored Orioles in the World Series in four consecutive games after dropping Game 1.

Increased run production, a new generation of high-profile managers, a new, young commissioner, the increased power of the players' union, revamped league formats and the introduction of playoffs, new multi-purpose stadiums—all these coalesced to propel the national pastime beyond its lethargy of 1968, the most visible symptom of which was the overdominance of pitching, and it was this amalgamation that led baseball on the path to the current modern game. ■

SEASON-BY-SEASON STATISTICS
American League

	Teams	Batting Average	Hits per Hits/Team	Runs per Runs/Team	ERA
1960	8	.255	10,689/1,336	5,414/677	3.87
1961	10	.256	14,037/1,404	7,342/734	4.02
1962	10	.255	14,068/1,407	7,183/718	3.97
1963	10	.247	13,609/1,361	6,599/660	3.63
1964	10	.247	13,637/1,364	6,607/661	3.63
1965	10	.242	13,158/1,316	6,388/639	3.46
1966	10	.240	13,005/1,301	6,276/628	3.44
1967	10	.236	12,766/1,277	5,992/599	3.23
1968	10	.230	12,359/1,236	5,532/553	2.98
1969	12	.246	16,120/1,343	7,960/663	3.62
1970	12	.250	16,404/1,367	8,109/676	3.71
1971	12	.247	15,957/1,330	7,472/623	3.46
1972	12	.239	14,751/1,229	6,441/537	3.06

National League

	Teams	Batting Average	Hits per Hits/Team	Runs per Runs/Team	ERA
1961	8	.262	11,029/1,379	5,600/700	4.03
1962	10	.261	14,453/1,445	7,278/728	3.94
1963	10	.245	13,434/1,343	6,181/618	3.29
1964	10	.254	14,032/1,403	6,517/652	3.54
1965	10	.249	13,794/1,379	6,558/656	3.54
1966	10	.256	14,202/1,420	6,624/662	3.61
1967	10	.249	13,698/1,370	6,218/622	3.38
1968	10	.243	13,351/1,335	5,577/558	2.99
1969	12	.250	16,461/1,372	7,890/658	3.59
1970	12	.258	17,151/1,429	8,771/731	4.05
1971	12	.252	16,590/1,383	7,601/633	3.47
1972	12	.248	15,683/1,307	7,265/605	3.45

SOURCE: Gary Gillette and Pete Palmer, *The ESPN Baseball Encyclopedia* (New York: Sterling, 2007).

Notes

1. "Spitball Rule Is Revised Again, Eliminating Balk and Providing for Fines," *New York Times*, 21 March 1968, 3.
2. Rex Lardner, "The Pitchers Are Ruining the Game," *New York Times*, 16 June 1968, sect. 6, 12.
3. Lardner, 13.
4. Hubbard quoted in Lardner, 68.
5. Leonard Koppett, "Dodgers Will Alter Outfield Dimensions as Aid to Hitters," *New York Times*, 14 November 1968, 58.
6. Koppett, 58.
7. Fay Vincent, "Shame on the Hall of Fame," *Manchester (Conn.) Journal Inquirer*, 12 December 2007, 27.
8. George Vecsey, "Baseball Rules Committee Makes 3 Decisions to Produce More Hits and Runs," *New York Times*, 4 December 1968, 57.

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The OBP Triple Crown

Bill Nowlin

I t's an article of faith these days that batting average is an old-fashioned statistic and that the new Holy Grail for batters is OBP—on-base percentage. The "walk's as good as a hit" approach has a lot to recommend it. After all, the hitter's goal is to get on base and, if possible, help score runs. The argument becomes complex, of course. Was Ty Cobb right in criticizing Ted Williams for taking a base on balls rather than trying harder to drive in a run, or was Williams right in insisting on the plate discipline that he felt made him the hitter he was—by refusing to swing at a bad pitch?

Others will argue that focusing on on-base percentage is also too simplistic, that a more sophisticated array of statistics is necessary to truly rank the best performance by hitters in a given year. (There are also arguments that the term OBP is a misnomer and that the more accurate term is OBA—on-base average.)

Leaving all that aside and considering only the substitution of on-base percentage for batting average as a measure of a hitter's performance, would there be a different set of Triple Crown winners if the three criteria were OBP, home runs, and runs batted in? Yes, there would. Two tables are presented below. Beginning with 1903, the first year that both leagues agreed that foul balls (the first two of them, anyhow, of an at-bat) are strikes, there are twelve seasons in which a player has led his league in batting average, home runs, and runs batted in all in the same year. Two players have done it twice: Rogers Hornsby and Ted Williams.

A player who draws a lot of walks is going to have an on-base percentage much higher than his batting average alone. Barry Bonds set the major-league record for the highest single-season OBP (.582) in 2002, in large part due to the large number of intentional and semi-intentional walks he drew: a record 198. He improved on those figures with 232 walks and an OBP of .609 in 2004. Bonds had shattered Ted Williams's long-established record of .553, set in 1941. Bonds led the league in batting average in 2002 as well but was second in home runs and only sixth in RBIs (in good part because the bat was taken out of his hands so many times by pitchers working around him.)

Replacing batting average as one of the three criteria for the Triple Crown and using on-base percentage instead, we find 21 seasons in which a batter has won the alternative Triple Crown. Babe Ruth, who never won the standard Triple Crown even once, ranks first with five of those 21 seasons. Rogers Hornsby still has his two, but, on the strength of his 1949 season, Ted Williams has three. No other player has more than one, but we find that Jimmie Foxx, Joe Medwick, and Mickey Mantle lose their Triple Crowns, while Gavy Cravath, Willie McCovey, Harmon Killebrew, Dick Allen, Mike Schmidt, and Barry Bonds each win one apiece.
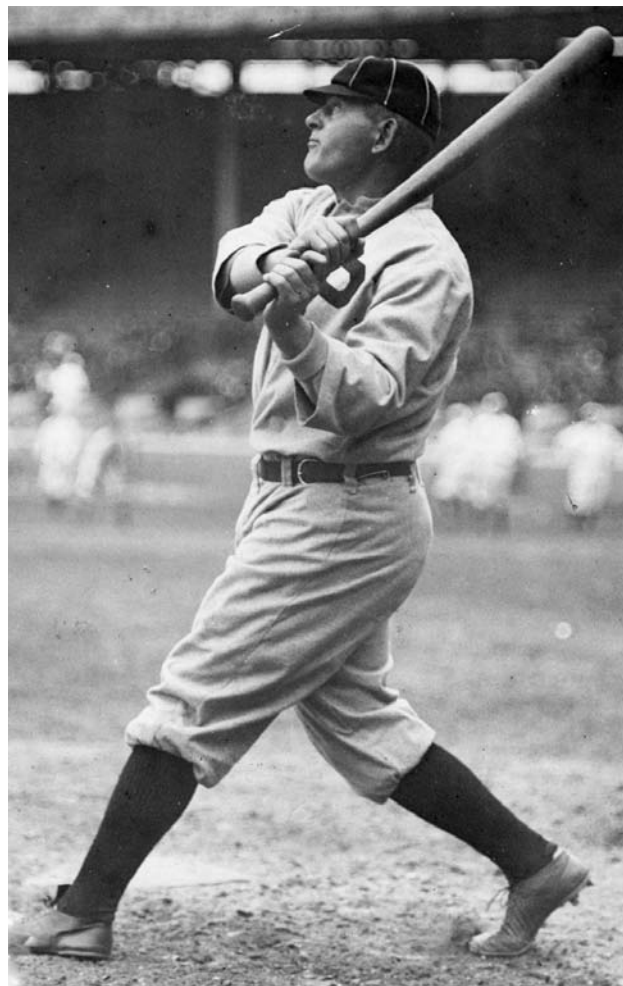
Gavy Cravath, Phillies outfielder. Were on-base percentage substituted for batting average, he would have won the Triple Crown in 1915. Babe Ruth would have won five times. Ted Williams would have won in 1949 (as well as in 1942 and 1947), and Dick Allen in 1972; Yastrzemski still would have won in 1967.

Standard Triple Crown Winners

Year	Batter	League	Avg	HR	RBI
1909	Ty Cobb	AL	.377	9	107
1922	Rogers Hornsby	NL	.401	42	152
1925	Rogers Hornsby	NL	.403	39	143
1933	Jimmie Foxx	AL	.356	48	163
1933	Chuck Klein	NL	.368	28	120
1934	Lou Gehrig	AL	.363	49	165
1937	Joe Medwick	NL	.374	31	154
1942	Ted Williams	AL	.356	36	137
1947	Ted Williams	AL	.343	32	114
1956	Mickey Mantle	AL	.353	52	130
1966	Frank Robinson	AL	.316	49	120
1967	Carl Yastrzemski	AL	.326	44	121

Triple Crown Winners, Substituting OBP for Avg

Year	Batte	League	OBP	HR	RBI	OPS
1909	Ty Cobb *	AL	.431	9	107	.948
1915	Gavy Cravath	NL	.393	24	115	.903
1919	Babe Ruth	AL	.456	29	114	1.113
1920	Babe Ruth	AL	.533	54	137	1.382
1921	Babe Ruth	AL	.512	59	171	1.358
1922	Rogers Hornsby *	NL	.459	42	152	1.181
1923	Babe Ruth	AL	.545	41	131	1.309
1925	Rogers Hornsby *	NL	.489	39	143	1.245
1926	Babe Ruth	AL	.516	47	150	1.253
1933	Chuck Klein *	NL	.422	28	120	1.024
1934	Lou Gehrig *	AL	.465	49	165	1.171
1942	Ted Williams *	AL	.499	36	137	1.147
1947	Ted Williams *	AL	.499	32	114	1.133
1949	Ted Williams	AL	.490	43	159	1.140
1966	Frank Robinson *	AL	.410	49	122	1.047
1967	Carl Yastrzemski *	AL	.418	44	121	1.040
1969	Willie McCovey	NL	.453	45	126	1.109
1969	Harmon Killebrew	AL	.427	49	140	1.011
						(second in OPS)
1972	Dick Allen	AL	.420	37	113	1.023
1981	Mike Schmidt **	NL	.435	31	91	1.079
1993	Barry Bonds	NL	.458	46	123	1.135

* Triple Crown winner with either BA or OBA.

** In 1981, a players' strike a cut short the MLB regular-season schedule.

If one wanted to pose the higher standard of a Quadruple Crown, requiring leadership in both batting average and on-base percentage, the asterisked players would have won it: Hornsby (twice), Williams (twice), and Klein, Gehrig, Robinson, and Yastrzemski.

Because OPS has become such a fashionable statistic in recent years, we added it to the new table and find just one instance in which the OPS leader was other than the OBP leader. In 1969, Killebrew was second in OPS, behind Reggie Jackson, who posted a 1.018 OPS that year. Killebrew was third in slugging, behind both Jackson (.608) and Rico Petrocelli (.589).

Clearly, the large number of walks drawn by Ruth and Williams has boosted their OBP figures. Ruth won only one batting title (.378 in 1924), but he led the American League in on-base percentage in ten different seasons. Among players who have appeared in 1,000 or more major-league games, he holds the fourth-highest walks percentage (.194), behind Ted Williams (.206), Barry Bonds (.203), and Max "Camera Eye" Bishop (.200).

Williams ranks first, having walked in 20.6 percent of his plate appearances. His greater number of walks lifted Williams over George Kell for the OBP lead in 1949. While Williams just barely lost the battle for average (his .343 was really .3427, to Kell's .3429), Kell's on-base percentage was .424 to Williams's .490. In fact, Kell ranked only fourth in OBP that year, behind both Luke Appling (.439) and Eddie Joost (.424). Williams had walked (or been walked) 162 times; Kell didn't even rate in the top 10. Despite having about the same number of at-bats (or less than 10 percent fewer—Kell had 522 and Williams had 566), Kell drew only 71 walks, less than half as many as Williams did. Kell hit only three home runs in 1949, to Williams's 43, and drove in only 59 runs, exactly 100 behind Williams's 159. (Williams's teammate Vern Stephens also drove in 159 that year.) Had Williams made just one out fewer in 1949, all else being equal, he would have won the batting title too—but, of course, he didn't.

Bishop? Despite his high percentage of walks, he led his league only once (1929) and never once ranked higher than third (1933) in on-base percentage. For his career, he is tied for thirteenth in OBP among players since 1903.

Babe Ruth ranks second with a lifetime on-base percentage of .474, while Williams ranks first with .482. Over the course of a career that extended from 1939 to 1960, and despite twice interrupting his career for military service, almost half the times Ted Williams stepped into the batter's box, he reached base safely. ■

Where Have You Gone, Carl Yastrzemski?

A Statistical Analysis of the Triple Crown

John E. Daniels

All I want out of life is that when I walk down the street folks will say,
"There goes the greatest hitter that ever lived."

—TED WILLIAMS

I n the 216 combined seasons of the modern era (1901–2008) in baseball, there have been 14 winners (9 in the American League, 4 in the National League) of the Triple Crown (TC). The TC winner is the league leader in batting average, home runs, and runs batted in a single season. The TC winners are listed in table 1.

TABLE 1. Triple Crown Winners

Year	Player	League	Team	BA	HR	RBI
1901	Nap Lajoie	AL	Athletics	.422	14	125
1909	Ty Cobb	AL	Tigers	.377	9	107
1922	Rogers Hornsby	NL	Cardinals	.401	42	152
1925	Rogers Hornsby	NL	Cardinals	.403	39	143
1933	Jimmie Foxx	AL	Athletics	.356	48	163
1933	Chuck Klein	NL	Phillies	.368	28	120
1934	Lou Gehrig	AL	Yankees	.363	49	165
1937	Joe Medwick	NL	Cardinals	.374	31*	154
1942	Ted Williams	AL	Red Sox	.356	36	137
1947	Ted Williams	AL	Red Sox	.343	32	114
1956	Mickey Mantle	AL	Yankees	.353	52	130
1966	Frank Robinson	AL	Orioles	.316	49	122
1967	Carl Yastrzemski	AL	Red Sox	.326	44*	121

* Tied for league lead

It is interesting to note the following facts about the TC:

• As of 2008, it has been 41 years since the last TC winner (Carl Yastrzemski, 1967).

• Before this 41-year drought, the longest period without a TC winner was 12 years (1910–21).

• With the exception of 1910–19, from 1901 through 1969 each decade had at least one TC winner.

In light of this, I will investigate here the absence of a TC winner since 1967, using the database at www.baseball1.com to examine the past 108 years of AL and NL hitting data.

ELIGIBILITY

To lead the league in BA, a player must meet the eligibility rules. These rules have changed over time.

• Before 1920, a player must have appeared in 60 percent of the team's games to qualify for a batting title. This number was rounded to the nearest integer.

• From 1920 through 1944, a player must have appeared in 100 games, except for the AL in 1938. That year Jimmie Foxx (.349 in 149 games) was awarded the batting title over Taffy Wright (.350 in 100 games). The relatively low number of games a player had to play to qualify would cost Foxx (.364 in 154 games) the Triple Crown in 1932, when Dale Alexander (.367 in 124 games) was awarded the batting crown.

• From 1945 through 1956, a player must have had 2.6 at-bats per team game.

• From 1951 through 1954, a player could lead if he still led after the necessary number of hitless at-bats were added to his at-bat total.

• From 1957 to the present, a player must have 3.1 plate appearances per team game. From 1967 to the present, a player could win the batting title if he still led after the necessary number of hitless plate appearances were added to his AB total. The application of this rule enabled Tony Gwynn (.353) to win the batting title in 1996.

So, for the purpose of analyzing the data with some consistency, I will use the current rule (3.1 plate appearances per game) throughout my analysis. It should be noted that, on five occasions (1904, 1915, 1918 in the AL, and 1919 in the NL) in the Dead Ball Era, the leader in HR did play in 60 percent of his team's games but did not have the modern requirement of 3.1 plate appearances. For this study, these

players were not considered eligible, but even if they were they would not have won the TC.

DISTRIBUTION OF BA, HR, AND RBI

Let's take a closer look at the numeric distributions of the three variables involved in the Triple Crown. Because of their similarity, both the American League and National League distributions were combined. Figure 1 provides the frequency distribution of these variables for all eligible players from 1901 through 2005 and shows how different the distribution of HR is from the distribution of BA and RBI.

As shown in figure 1, both BA and RBI are mound-shaped and slightly right-skewed. HR is clearly *not* mound-shaped but is right-skewed. DeVany (2006) claims HR is a stable Paretian probability distribution with a finite mean and an infinite variance. To simplify things, if we were to consider HR as an exponentially distributed random variable (with $\mu = 13.02$), the 99th percentile would be approximately 4.61 standard deviations above the mean versus only 2.575 standard deviations above the mean for a normally distributed random variable (BA and RBI). So a TC winner must be first and foremost a prolific home-run hitter. Common sense tells us this, but these distributions provide some verification.

STATISTICAL DEPENDENCY OF BEING THE LEAGUE LEADER

The probability of leading the league in one of these categories is not statistically independent of leading in the other two categories. For example, hitting a HR also increases both BA and RBI. If 216 years of combined AL and NL baseball data are examined we can see the following (table 2).

TABLE 2.

The League Leader* In:	N	Was Also the League Leader* In:	
		RBI	BA
HR	216	98	18
RBI	216	***	32

* Coleaders were also included.

If you led the league in HR, you have a higher probability of winning the RBI crown (98/216 = .454) than of winning the BA title (18/216 = .083). The product of these two probabilities (.454 x .083 = .038), if we assume statistical independence and the rules of conditional probabilities, would be the probability of winning the TC [P(TC)]. As noted above, there have been 13 TC winners in 216 combined years of baseball. So, we estimate P(TC) = 13/216 = .060. Since .038 ≠ .060, these events are not statistically independent of each other. It would further simplify things if we had both statistical independence and a uniform probability distribution $(1/n)$ for all three variables. Under this situation, the probability of winning the TC for a randomly selected batter would simply be the product of leading the league in each category $(1/n)$, or

FIGURE 1. Frequency Distribution of BA, HR, and RBI, 1901–2005 (Eligible Hitters)
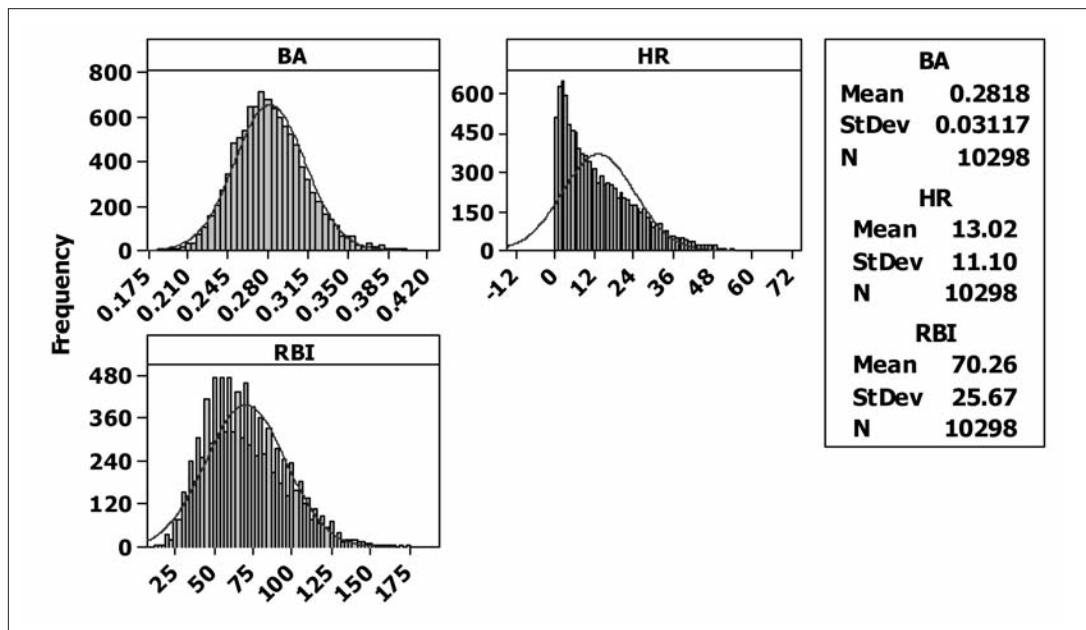
$$P(TC) \ = \ (1/n) \ x \ (1/n) \ x \ (1/n) \ = \ (1/n^3) \qquad [1]$$

Of course this isn't the case. For example, in a league with only 10 competitors there would be only a 1/1000 = .001 probability of winning the TC. This would be an extremely rare event, even rarer than in actual baseball history. So any estimation of probabilities associated with the TC must account for this lack of statistical independence as well as for the nature of the distributions.

THE EFFECT OF COMPETITION

Don't look back; something may be gaining on you.
—Satchel Paige

It is no secret that increased competition makes it tougher to dominate in one's chosen endeavor. AT&T, General Motors, and McDonald's were all once dominant icons of their respective industries. However, success breeds imitation. An increase in competition has reduced these corporations to competitors, not dominators, vying for market share. Such an analogy is comparable when evaluating hitters. One can argue that increased competition makes it more difficult for any one player to dominate in all three TC categories. Figures 2 and 3 depict the increase in hitting competition within the American League and the National League, respectively, using the current eligibility requirement of 3.1 plate appearances per team game.

Note that, while the eligible-hitter trends in figures 2 and 3 are increasing, they are somewhat erratic. The trend toward increase, starting around 1969, can be explained by league expansion and the designated hitter in the AL beginning in 1973. The erratic nature of the trend can perhaps be explained by the random influence of player injuries, platooning, interleague trades, labor strikes (resulting in fewer games played), etc. For years with TC winners, the total number of competitors is summarized in table 3.

TABLE 3.

Year	TC Winner	Total Competitors
1901	Nap Lajoie	47
1909	Ty Cobb	34
1922	Rogers Hornsby	39
1925	Rogers Hornsby	37
1933	Jimmie Foxx	51
1933	Chuck Klein	48
1934	Lou Gehrig	43
1937	Joe Medwick	37
1942	Ted Williams	45
1947	Ted Williams	43
1956	Mickey Mantle	41
1966	Frank Robinson	43
1967	Carl Yastrzemski	46

The smallest number of TC competitors was 34 (Cobb, 1909); the largest number was 51 (Foxx, 1933). Although figures 2 and 3 show that there is an overall increase in hitting competition, the trick is to under-

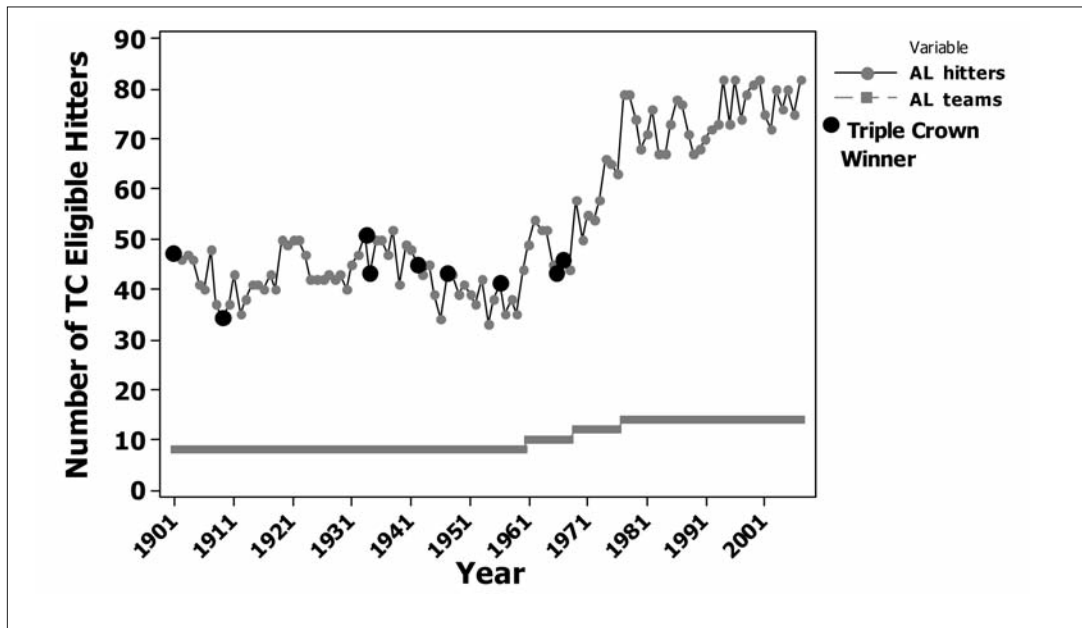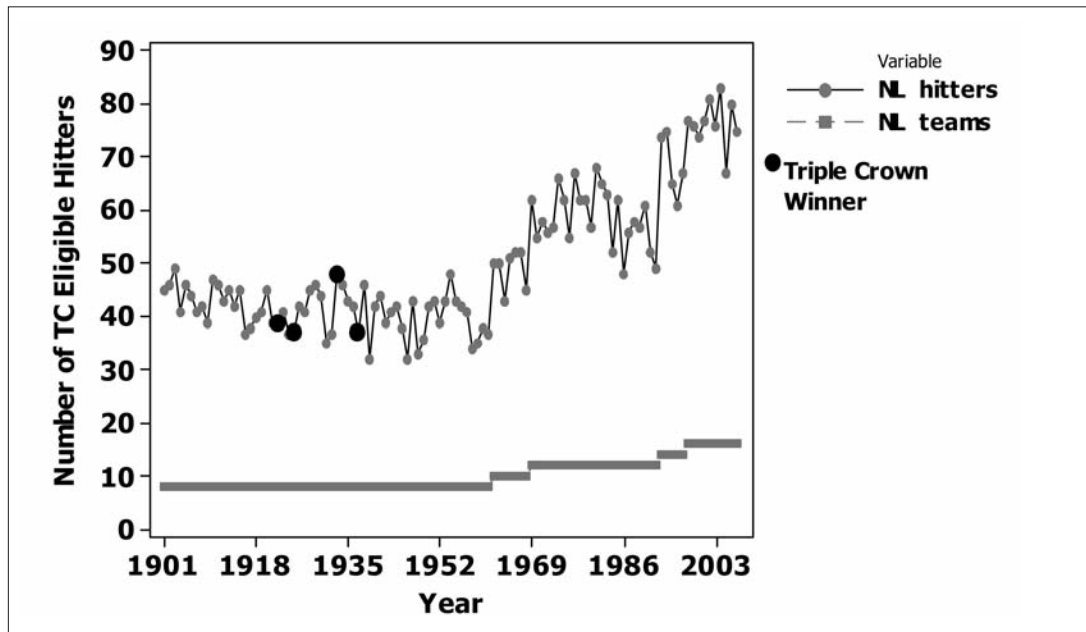FIGURE 2. Number of AL Teams and TC-Eligible Hitters

FIGURE 3. Number of NL Teams and TC-Eligible Hitters

stand just how much influence this increase has on the probability of winning the TC. Since using equation [1] will not produce the desired results, we will first simulate winning the TC. Intuitively, we expect this simulation to show that an increase in competition will reduce P(TC). The exact nature of this relationship, however, needs to be investigated. Once the relationship is determined, a statistical model can be constructed.

TRIPLE CROWN SIMULATION AND STATISTICAL MODELING
This analysis will be a two-stage process:

• Simulate batting results to determine the functional relationship between the number of competitors and the probability of winning the Triple Crown.

• Using a chosen statistical model, estimate the parameters of this functional relationship using the actual TC results.

To perform stage 1, I used Fleischman's (1978) Power Method and some SAS programming guidelines from Fan and Fan (2005) to create a population (and subsequent random sample). This simulated population is given in the top panel of figure 4. Note the close similarities with the data in the left panel, the actual frequency distributions previously given in figure 1.

The simulation is conducted as follows:

A random sample of size n competitors is taken from the simulated population. If a player in this sample wins the Triple Crown among his competitors, this event is noted. This process is repeated 10,000 times and the probability of winning the TC for n competitors is calculated as P(TC) = *number of times TC won*/10,000. The process is then repeated for an increasing n, and the probability of winning the TC for each n is calculated. We might expect some sort of decreasing curve, since under independence the curve would follow equation [1]. It should be emphasized here that the objective at this stage is only to verify the mathematical nature of the relationship between P(TC) and n, not to estimate the actual probabilities. The results of the simulation are provided in figure 5.

As expected, the relationship between P(TC) and the number of competitors is some sort of monotonic decreasing curve.

Because winning the Triple Crown is a dichotomous outcome (Yes = 1 vs. No = 0) and the relationship appears monotonic decreasing, it was decided to fit the empirical data in table 4 to a logistic regression model. The general form of the logistic function is

$$P(TC) = e^{b_0 + b_1 X} / 1 + e^{b_0 + b_1 X} \qquad [2]$$

in which X represents the number of competitors and b_0 and b_1 represent the parameters to be estimated. Table 4 summarizes the occurrence of TC winners at the different levels of competition.
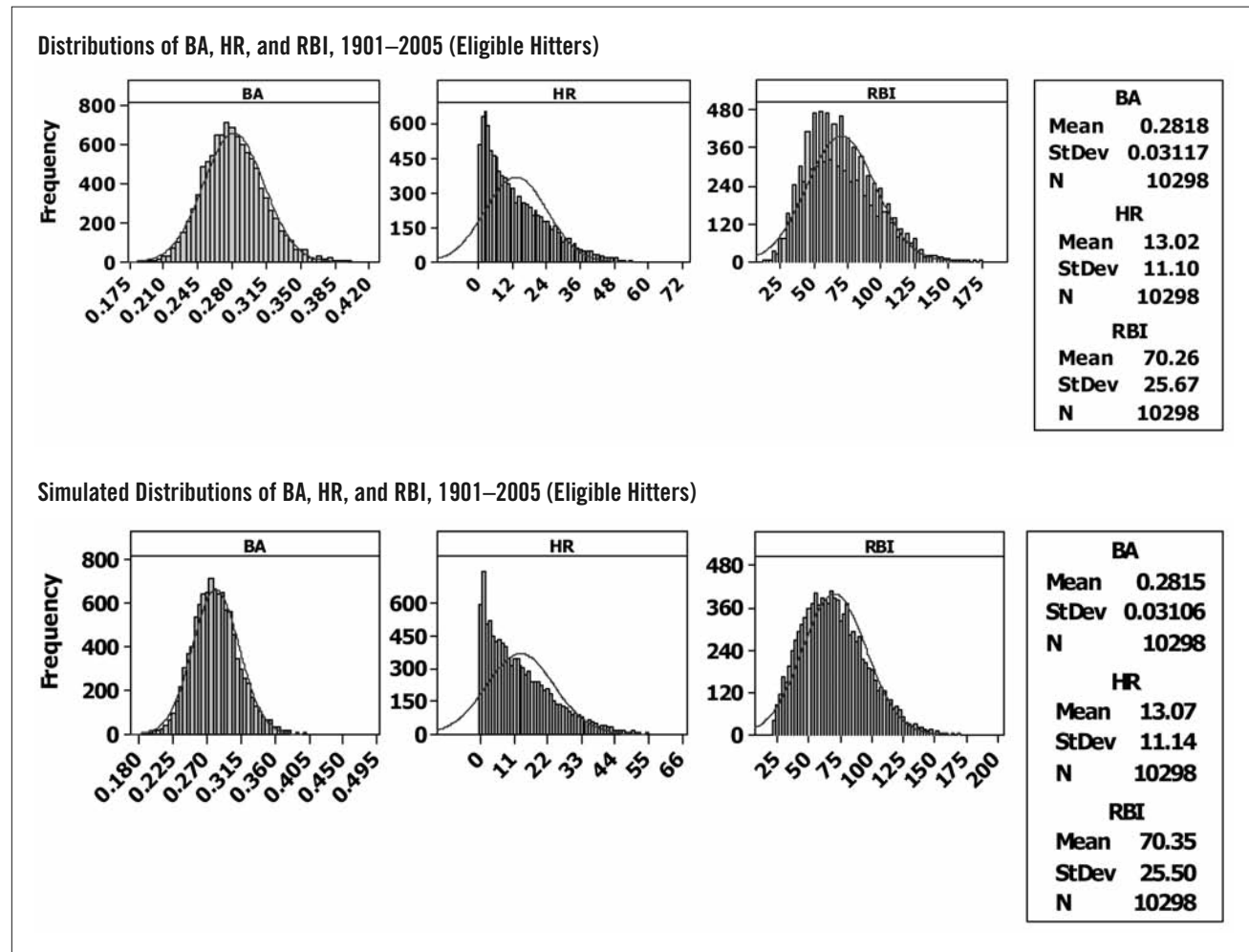
FIGURE 4.

Distributions of BA, HR, and RBI, 1901–2005 (Eligible Hitters)

Simulated Distributions of BA, HR, and RBI, 1901–2005 (Eligible Hitters)

FIGURE 5. Simulated TC Probabilities vs. Number of Competitors (1 to 100)
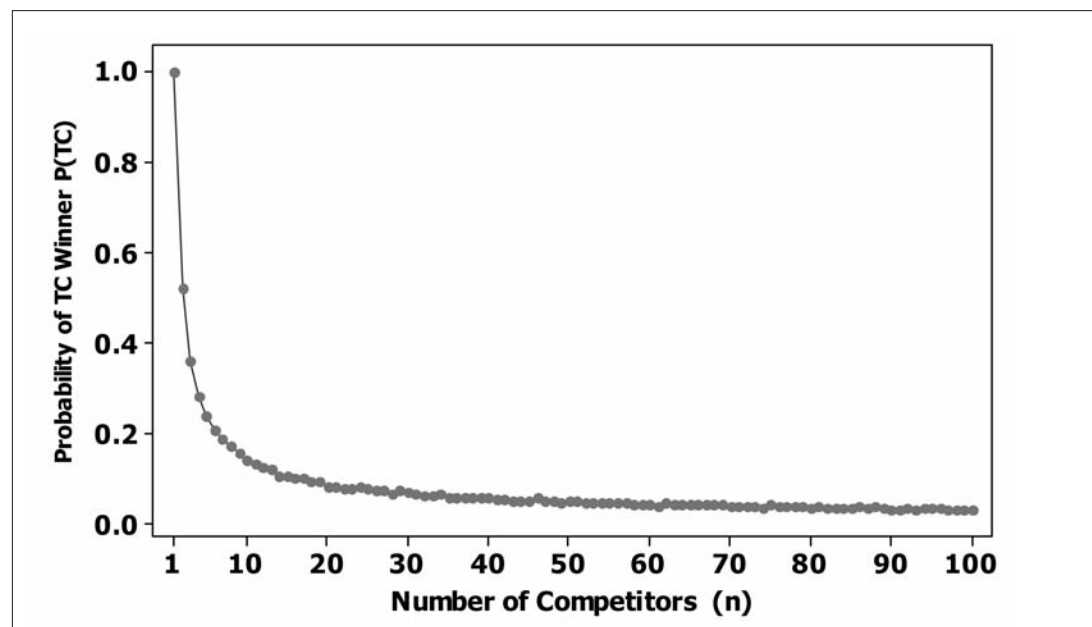
TABLE 4.

Competitors (n)	Number of Occurences of (n) Competitors (N)	Times TC Won (X)
32	2	0
33	2	0
34	3	1
35	5	0
36	1	0
37	9	2
38	6	0
39	8	1
40	5	0
41	13	1
42	13	0
43	16	3
44	5	0
45	11	1
46	8	1
47	6	1
48	5	1
49	5	0
50	7	0
51	2	1
52	7	0
53	0	0
54	2	0
55	3	0
56	2	0
57	3	0
58	5	0
59	0	0
60	0	0
61	2	0
62	5	0
63	2	0
64	0	0
65	3	0
66	2	0
67	6	0
68	4	0
69	0	0
70	1	0
71	2	0
72	2	0
73	4	0
74	4	0
75	4	0
76	4	0
77	3	0
78	1	0
79	3	0
80	3	0
81	2	0
82	4	0
83	1	0

The following model (with acceptable diagnostics) resulted in:

The LOGISTIC Procedure

Analysis of Maximum Likelihood Estimates

Parameter	DF	Estimate	Standard Error	Wald Chi-Square	Pr > ChiSq
Intercept	1	1.1839	1.6220	0.5327	0.4655
comp	1	-0.0843	0.0372	5.1417	0.0234

Odds Ratio Estimates

Effect	Point Estimate	95% Wald Confidence Limits	
comp	0.919	0.855	0.989

Association of Predicted Probabilities and Observed Responses

Percent Concordant	67.3	Somers' D	0.383
Percent Discordant	28.9	Gamma	0.399
Percent Tied	3.8	Tau-a	0.044
Pairs	2639	c	0.692

With fitted model:

$$P(TC) = e^{1.1839 - .0843X}/1 + e^{1.1839 - .0843X} \qquad [3]$$

Using [3], we have a plot of the predicted probabilities of winning the TC versus the level of competition, as in figure 6.

Some select probabilities of winning the TC for a given level of competition are provided below in table 5. Note that P(TC) is cut approximately more than half every time the number of competitors increases by 10.

TABLE 5.

Total Competitors (n)	P(TC)
30	0.2067
40	0.1008
50	0.0460
60	0.0204
70	0.0089
80	0.0038

When we examine the years 1901 through 67, we see that the mean P(TC) = .080. From 1968 through 2007, the mean P(TC) = .0150 and is more than an 81 percent decrease. In the year 2008 alone, there were 68 TC-eligible competitors in the AL, which has a predicted P(TC) = .010. This is more than an 88 percent decrease in probability from the mean in the period 1901–67.

CLOSE, BUT NO CIGAR

For further evidence of the influence that competition has on the TC, let's examine those players who ranked first in two TC categories but second in the remaining category (table 6).

Except for Yastrzemski in 1967, no player since 1953 has come as close as the players listed in table 6. The closest in the American League was Dick Allen (White Sox), who in 1972 hit .308 with 37 HR and 113 RBIs but finished third in BA, behind Rod Carew (Twins, .318) and Lou Pinella (Royals, .312). Jim Rice (Red Sox) in 1978 hit .315 with 46 HR and 139 RBIs but finished third in BA, behind Rod Carew (.333) and Al Oliver (Rangers, .324). In the National League, Dante Bichette (Rockies) hit .340 with 40 HR and 128 RBIs but finished third in BA, behind Tony Gwynn (Padres, .368) and Mike Piazza (Dodgers, .346). The effect of increased competition has not only reduced the chance of a player winning the TC. It has kept players from even coming close.
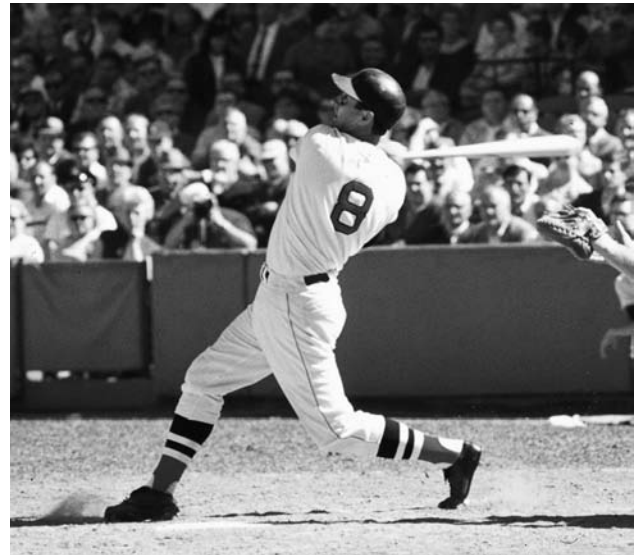
Carl Yastrzemski, the last Triple Crown winner, in 1967, during a pitching-dominant era, when the numbers he put up—.326, 44, 121—were, for a TC winner, modest by today's standards.

COURTESY OF THE BOSTON RED SOX

Year	Player	Team (league)	BA (rank)	HR (rank)	RBI (rank)	Why Lost TC?
1905	Cy Seymour	CIN (NL)	.377 (1)	8 (2)	121 (1)	Fred Odwell CIN hit 9 HR
1908	Honus Wagner	PIT (NL)	.354 (1)	10 (2)	109 (1)	Tim Jordan BRO hit 12 HR
1913	Gavy Cravath	PHI (NL)	.341 (2)	19 (1)	128 (1)	Jake Daubert BRO hit .350
1921	Rogers Hornsby	STL (NL)	.397 (1)	21 (2)	126 (1)	Gene Kelly NYG hit 23 HR
1923	Babe Ruth	NY (AL)	.393 (2)	41 (1)	131 (1)	Harry Heilman DET hit .403
1924	Babe Ruth	NY (AL)	.378 (1)	46 (1)	121 (2)	Goose Goslin WAS had 129 RBI
1926	Babe Ruth	NY (AL)	.372 (2)	47 (1)	150 (1)	Heinie Manush DET hit .378
1932	Jimmie Foxx	PHI (AL)	.364 (2)	58 (1)	169 (1)	Dale Alexander (DET/BOS) hit .367
1938	Jimmie Foxx	PHI (AL)	.349 (1)	50 (2)	175 (1)	Hank Greenberg DET hit 58 HR
1949	Ted Williams	BOS (AL)	.3427 (2)	43 (1)	159 (1*)	George Kell DET hit .3429
1953	Al Rosen	CLE (AL)	.336 (2)	43 (1)	145 (1)	Mickey Vernon WAS hit .337

* Tied for League Lead

FIGURE 6. Probability of Winning the TC vs. Number of Competitors
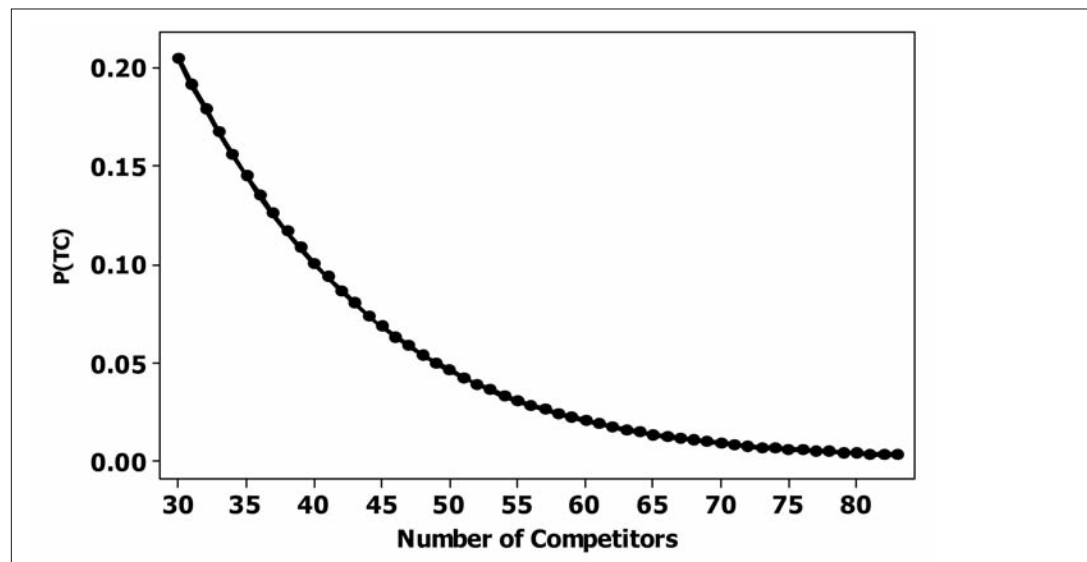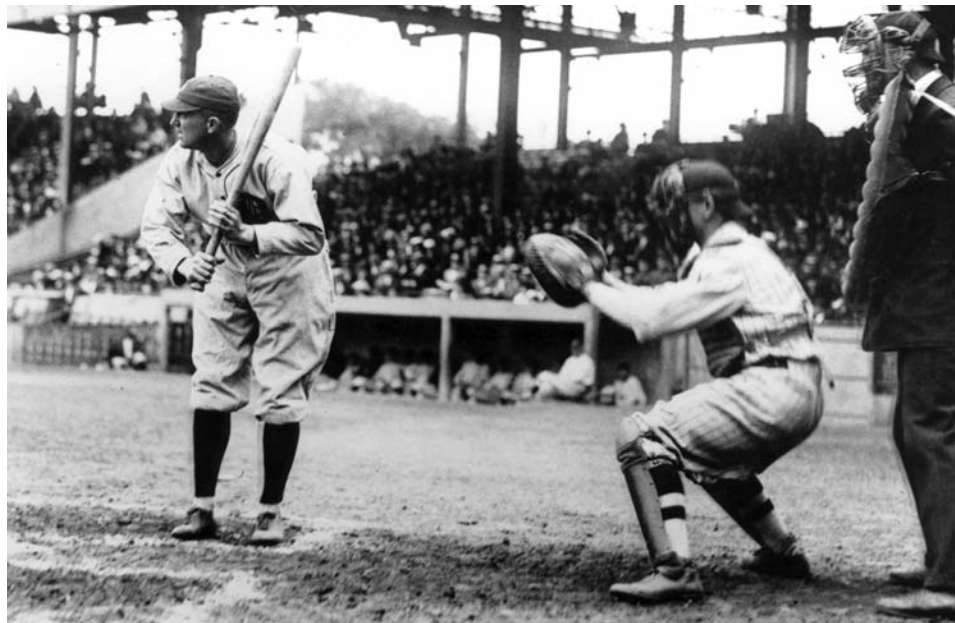
Ty Cobb, winner of the Triple Crown in 1909, the only year he led the American League in home runs. He hit all of 9. In his 24-year career, he led the league three other times in RBIs, and he won 11 batting titles.

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WAITING FOR "MR. RIGHT"

It is sometimes argued that the right batter simply hasn't come along: "When baseball's next Michael Jordan or Tiger Woods appears, then we'll have a another Triple Crown winner." Perhaps, but let's examine some of the superlative batting performances over the past 40 years. Looking at table 7, we can see that there have certainly been some excellent hitters, to judge from their performances. Their numbers are as good as or better than Yastrzemski's in 1967, although here I have not standardized their values relative to those of their peers.

TABLE 7.

Year	Player	Team	BA	HR	RBI
1993	Barry Bonds	SF	.336	46	123
1997	Larry Walker	COL	.366	49	130
1998	Albert Belle	CLE	.328	49	152
1999	Manny Ramirez	CLE	.333	44	165
2000	Vladimir Guerrero	MON	.345	44	123
2001	Luis Gonzalez	ARI	.326	57	142
2001	Sammy Sosa	CHI	.328	64	160
2001	Barry Bonds	SF	.328	73	137
2001	Todd Helton	COL	.336	49	146
2004	Albert Pujols	STL	.331	46	123
2004	Adrian Beltre	LAD	.334	48	121
2006	Albert Pujols	STL	.331	49	137

Moreover, there have been hitters who have finished first in each of the TC categories but in different years (Barry Bonds, Alex Rodriguez, Andres Galarraga). The talent is clearly there, but the increased level of competition makes it difficult to dominate in all three hitting categories simultaneously.

CONCLUSION

In my opinion, the Triple Crown winner is probably extinct. Changes to the game that have continued to increase the number of competing hitters (expansion, the designated hitter) have significantly decreased the probability of a hitter ever winning the Triple Crown. Granted, the evidence presented here is based on correlated rather than causal relationships, but, still, it requires some explanation that no one has won the Triple Crown in the past 41 years. At the very least, we can say that a contemporary player who has the tools to be considered a TC candidate faces barriers that are more formidable than those faced by his predecessors forty years ago. ∎

Note

The data for this analysis was provided by Sean Lahman, Lahman's Baseball Archive Database (v. 5.5), at www.baseball1.com. Any discrepancies between this database and other commonly used baseball databases should not affect the conclusions I present in this article.

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The Authorized Correction of Errors in Runs Scored in the Official Records (1945–2007) for Detroit Tigers Players

Herm Krabbenhoft

The most important statistic for a baseball team is wins (winning percentage)—the more (higher), the better. And even the most casual fan knows that the essential component for winning is scoring runs—at least one run (more than the opposing team) in a game. Thus, contributing to the scoring of runs can be considered the supreme objective for each of the individual players on the team.

There are two fundamental metrics for evaluating the performance of an individual player with respect to his contributions to the scoring of runs for his team:

- Scoring the runs
- Batting in the runs

This article's focus is on the former statistic—scoring runs.

How accurate are a player's runs-scored statistics in the official baseball records and in the various derived baseball encyclopedias, record books, and information guides?

One would hope, based on the importance assigned to runs, that the statistics are 100 percent correct.

Unfortunately, they are not.

Fortunately, however, as runs-scored errors are discovered and corrected, the pertinent changes are entered into the official records.

For example, consider the runs-scored record of Hall of Famer Eddie Collins. According to his official American League scoresheets for the 1920 campaign, he is credited with 115 runs scored. This value was presented in numerous publications, such as *The Baseball Encyclopedia* (Macmillan), *Sports Encyclopedia Baseball* (Neft and Cohen), and *Total Baseball* (Thorn and Palmer).[1–3]

However, it was subsequently discovered that, in the 1920 season, Collins actually scored 117 runs, and the resulting corrections were made in the various baseball encyclopedias and record books.[4–7] Likewise, the "Eddie Collins' Career Batting Statistics" section of the National Baseball Hall of Fame website (with the notation "Official major league statistics verified by Elias Sports Bureau") now shows 117 runs scored in 1920.[8]

In this article, I present the results of my comprehensive investigation of the accuracy of the official baseball records for the runs scored by Detroit Tigers players during the period 1945–2007. For each of the runs-scored errors I discovered, I also determined unequivocally the corrections, which I submitted to the Elias Sports Bureau (the official statisticians of MLB), which then sanctioned all of the proposed changes.

A baseball subject of particular interest to me involves ascertaining the longest consecutive-games streaks for various accomplishments—for example, Consecutive Games On Base Safely (CGOBS) streaks.[9–11] I also have a longstanding interest in the Detroit Tigers.[12–14] So, combining these two interests, I initiated a research effort to determine the longest Consecutive Games RUN Scored (CGRUNS) streak achieved by each Tigers player in each season from 1901 to the present—that is, for the entire history of the Detroit franchise in the American League.

The most critical aspect of conducting any research is the generation and use of accurate data. Therefore, for my CGRUNS-streak research, it is absolutely mandatory that I have accurate runs-scored information—on a game-by-game basis—for each Tigers player.

RESEARCH PROCEDURES

My research plan consisted of first dividing the hundred-plus years of Tigers history into manageable periods: 1945–present, which I call Phase One; 1920–44, which I call Phase Two; and 1901–19, which I call Phase Three. This article deals with Phase One.

I also decided to use each of the four sources of game-by-game runs-scored information:

The official records produced for the American League.[15]

The daily records for players provided on the Retrosheet website. The American League seasons presently included in the Retrosheet database are 1954 through 2007.

The box scores presented in various publications, such as the *New York Times* (*NYT*) and *The Sporting News* (*TSN*).

The detailed game descriptions (including box scores) provided in the Detroit newspapers—the *Detroit News*, the *Detroit Free Press*, and the *Detroit Times*—and in the local newspapers of the teams opposing the Tigers on given dates.
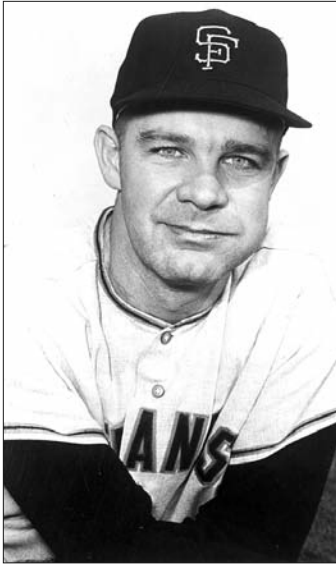
Harvey Kuenn, shown here later in his career with the Giants. In eight seasons with the Tigers he scored 950 runs (not 951). In 1956, Charlie Maxwell scored 97 runs, not 96, demoting Kuenn and Al Kaline from team coleadership to a tie for second place.

Here are the specifics of my modus operandi for obtaining reliable game-by-game runs-scored information:

1945–69. Employing the *NYT* and/or *TSN* box scores, I generated day-by-day (DBD) lists of the runs scored for each Tigers player for each season during the 1945–69 period.

I compared my box-score-generated results with the corresponding official DBD results (as well as the Retrosheet daily records for 1954–69) and thereby identified any runs-scored discrepancies.

For each discrepancy, I examined the relevant newspaper accounts to obtain the precise details for each Tigers run—who scored the run and how the run was scored.

With this detailed descriptive information, I resolved every runs-scored discrepancy—sometimes the newspaper box-score information was wrong; sometimes the official DBD information was wrong.

For those runs-scored discrepancies where the official DBD records were wrong, I obtained the comprehensive documentation needed to make the appropriate corrections, which I then submitted to the Elias Sports Bureau for review.

With regard to assembling the documentation required to achieve the appropriate corrections to the official records by the Elias Sports Bureau, I adhered strictly to the guidance specified by Steve Hirdt, the Bureau's executive vice president: "We employ a standard of proof that lies somewhere between two of the standards common to judicial matters in this country: that is, somewhere between proof that is 'clear and convincing' and proof that is 'beyond reasonable doubt.'"[16]

Furthermore, I followed my Completely Closed Circuit Principle, which is to achieve a completely closed loop for each player affected by the error/correction. In other words, I maintain that, if one wishes to correct a statistic for a player in a given game, one must also correct that statistic for each and every game in each and every season of the player's major-league career.

1970–2007. I relied completely on the Retrosheet play-by-play data and for runs scored found no discrepancies between the official DBD records and the Retrosheet daily records for Detroit Tigers players during the 1970–2007 period.[17]

RESULTS

Table 1 presents in chronological order the 26 runs-scored errors and corrections I discovered for the 1945–2007 Detroit Tigers players. Each of the runs-scored errors involves two players—one player who was undercredited and one other player who was overcredited. Nineteen players, including four who were subsequently elected to the Hall of Fame, had runs-scored errors.

Upon careful review of my documentation, the Elias Sports Bureau approved and accepted each of the changes/corrections shown in table 1.[18–19]

TABLE 1. Runs-Scored Errors and Corrections for Detroit Tigers Players (1945–2007)

Date	Player	Error	Correction	Player	Error	Correction
1945/6/13	Joe Hoover	1	2	Eddie Mayo	1	0
1945/8/9	Hub Walker	0	1	Hank Greenberg	2	1
1945/9/22	Eddie Mayo	1	2	Hal Newhouser	2	1
1946/6/26 (1)	Eddie Lake	1	2	Skeeter Webb	1	0
1946/8/24	Eddie Lake	1	2	George Kell	2	1
1946/9/18	Pat Mullin	0	1	Hank Greenberg	1	0
1946/9/29	Eddie Lake	0	1	Johnny Lipon	1	0
1947/5/16	Pat Mullin	1	2	Hoot Evers	1	0
1952/9/11	Fred Hatfield	0	1	Harvey Kuenn	1	0
1954/8/1	Al Kaline	0	1	Ray Boone	1	0
1956/5/15	Charlie Maxwell	1	2	Frank House	1	0
1959/5/30 (1)	Charlie Maxwell	0	1	Al Kaline	1	0
1963/9/1 (1)	Bubba Phillips	0	1	Norm Cash	1	0

The authorized corrections of these runs-scored errors in individual games also precipitate changes in the affected players' performance records—both single-season and career. These corrections can have great significance, as shown in the next two sections.

CONSEQUENCES—SINGLE SEASON

Table 2 presents the consequences of applying the single-game corrections (table 1) to the players' final runs-scored statistics for the specific seasons.

In addition to the changes in the players' final runs-scored statistics for the specific single season(s), other important ramifications result from correction of the runs-scored errors I discovered.

Charlie Maxwell, with 97 (not 96) runs scored in 1956, was actually the sole leader in that department for the Tigers. Prior to the Elias Sports Bureau's effecting this correction, Maxwell, Al Kaline, and Harvey Kuenn were considered to be the coleaders. Thus, in the 2006 edition (and previous editions) of the *Detroit Tigers Information Guide*, in the "Yearly Detroit Tigers Batting Leaders" section (page 267), Kaline, Kuenn, and Maxwell are listed as coleaders in 1956 with 96 runs scored. With the authorization by the Elias Sports Bureau of the errors/corrections (table 1), the appropriate changes were made in the 2007 edition of the *Detroit Tigers Information Guide* (page 279)—Maxwell alone is listed as the Tigers' leader in 1956 with 97 runs scored. Similarly, Eddie Lake was the Tigers' team leader in runs scored in 1946—the 2006 edition of the *Detroit Tigers Information Guide* listed him with 105 runs scored, while the 2007 edition shows him with the correct total of 108 runs.

Hank Greenberg did not score a run in the game on September 18, 1946, as unequivocally verified by the detailed accounts in the relevant newspapers. Consequently, the longest CGRUNS streak that he assembled in 1946 was a 10-gamer—not a 14-gamer as suggested by his (uncorrected) official DBD records. The pertinent information follows.

Greenberg scored at least one run in each of the Tigers games on September 14, 15, and 17; this gave him a CGRUNS streak of 3. According to his (uncorrected) official DBD records, Greenberg scored one run in the September 18 game, thereby erroneously extending his CGRUNS streak to 4. Because Greenberg managed to score at least one run in each of Detroit's next 10 games (September 19–28), it appears that—from the uncorrected official DBD records—he compiled a CGRUNS streak of 14.

Actually, however, Greenberg did not score a run in that September 18 game, a 2–1 Tigers victory over St. Louis. Detroit scored its first run in the ninth inning when Greenberg doubled and Pat Mullin was inserted as a pinch-runner for Greenberg; Mullin then scored on a 1-RBI single by Fred Hutchinson. The Tigers scored their second run in the tenth inning (after Greenberg had been removed from the contest), with George Kell plating the marker on a 1-RBI single by Roy Cullenbine. That Greenberg did not, in fact, achieve a CGRUNS streak of 14 is very significant—as presented in the companion article, "The Longest Streaks of Consecutive Games in Which a Detroit Tiger Scored a Run (1945–2008)" (see page 123), the longest single-season CGRUNS streak by a Detroit Tigers player during the 1945–2007 period was a 13-gamer.[20]

TABLE 2. Single-Season Runs-Scored Consequences for Detroit Tigers Players (1945–2007)

Player	Year	Correction	Single-Season Runs-Scored Consequence
Ray Boone	1954	-1	75 runs (not 76 runs)
Norm Cash	1963	-1	66 runs (not 67 runs)
Hoot Evers	1947	-1	66 runs (not 67 runs)
Hank Greenberg	1945	-1	46 runs (not 47 runs)
Hank Greenberg	1946	-1	90 runs (not 91 runs)
Fred Hatfield	1952	+1	43 runs (not 42 runs) with the Tigers; see text for entire season
Joe Hoover	1945	+1	34 runs (not 33 runs)
Frank House	1956	-1	43 runs (not 44 runs)
Al Kaline	1954	+1	43 runs (not 42 runs)
Al Kaline	1959	-1	85 runs (not 86 runs)
Harvey Kuenn	1952	-1	1 run (not 2 runs)
George Kell	1946	-1	66 runs (not 67 runs) with the Tigers; see text for entire season
Eddie Lake	1946	+3	108 runs (not 105 runs)
Johnny Lipon	1946	-1	3 runs (not 4 runs)
Charlie Maxwell	1956	+1	97 runs (not 96 runs)
Charlie Maxwell	1959	+1	82 runs (not 81 runs)
Eddie Mayo	1946	0	71 runs (unchanged, i.e., compensating errors)
Pat Mullin	1946	+1	35 runs (not 34 runs)
Pat Mullin	1947	+1	63 runs (not 62 runs)
Hal Newhouser	1945	-1	8 runs (not 9 runs)
Bubba Phillips	1963	+1	43 runs (not 42 runs)
Hub Walker	1945	+1	5 runs (not 4 runs)
Skeeter Webb	1946	-1	11 runs (not 12 runs)

Finally, note that the single-season consequences included in table 2 are for Detroit Tigers players only. However, two of the players also played for other teams during the indicated seasons. The pertinent full-season runs-scored information for them follows.

Fred Hatfield actually scored 43 (not 42) runs for the 1952 Tigers after joining them following a June 3 trade with the Red Sox. According to his official DBD records, Hatfield also scored 6 runs with the 1952 Red Sox. In order to have the accurate full-1952-season runs-scored total for Hatfield, it was imperative that I carry out a comparison of the newspaper box scores and the official DBD records for his runs scored with Boston. After I did so, I found 100 percent correspondence. Thus, for the entire 1952 season, Hatfield actually scored 49 (not 48) runs.

George Kell actually scored 66 (not 67) runs for the 1946 Tigers after joining them following a May 18 trade with the Athletics. According to his official DBD records, Kell also scored 3 runs with the 1946 A's. In order to have the accurate full-1946-season runs-scored total for Kell, it was imperative that I carry out a comparison of the newspaper box scores and the official DBD records for his runs scored with Philadelphia. After I did so, I found 100 percent correspondence. Thus, for the entire 1946 season, Kell actually scored 69 (not 70) runs.

CONSEQUENCES—CAREER

To effect the correction of a player's career runs-scored statistics, one could simply add the single-season correction to the player's currently published career record. For example, consider George Kell. As shown previously, the Hall of Fame third baseman actually scored 69 (not 70) runs in 1946. So one could conclude that Kell scored 880 (not 881) runs in his major-league career. However, such a conclu-

sion is based on the assumption that no other runs-scored errors are present in Kell's official record. Because I had (at first) researched Kell's runs-scored record only during his tenure with the Tigers (1946–52) and the Athletics (1946), I did not know for certain about the accuracy of his runs-scored statistics during his other major-league seasons: 1943–45 (Philadelphia), 1952–54 (Boston), 1954–56 (Chicago), and 1956–57 (Baltimore). This uncertainty is the rationale for following the Completely Closed Circuit Principle.

To address that uncertainty, I conducted a comprehensive comparison of the runs-scored information presented in Kell's official records with that derived from newspaper box scores for his non-Tigers seasons. I found no other runs-scored errors for Kell. Thus, in his major-league career, Kell actually scored 880 (not 881) runs.

Similarly, I followed my Completely Closed Circuit Principle for each of the other players listed in table 2—that is, I ascertained the accuracy of their runs-scored statistics for their non-Tigers seasons and/or their pre-1945 seasons. In this follow-up Completely Closed Circuit Principle investigation I discovered six more runs-scored errors in the official records; see table 3. Three of the nineteen players included in table 1 were affected: Hank Greenberg (twice), Eddie Mayo, and Joe Hoover.

After I provided the relevant documentation for the correction of these errors to the Elias Sports Bureau for review, Elias concurred completely with my findings and authorized my proposed corrections.[21]

With the additional runs-scored errors/corrections (table 3), I was able to derive accurate career runs-scored statistics for each of the players listed in table 1; see table 4.

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Two corrections to Al Kaline's record (add one run in 1954, subtract one in 1959) cancel each other and leave him with 1,622 career runs scored for the Tigers, ranking third him on the club's all-time list, behind Ty Cobb (2,088) and Charlie Gehringer (1,744). Kaline holds the franchise record for most games played (2,834) and is tied with Ron LeFlore and Lou Whitaker for the most seasons (5) in which he led the team in scoring a run in the most consecutive games.

In addition to the changes in the player's major-league career runs-scored statistics, there are two other significant career runs-scored changes.

As shown in table 4, Norm Cash actually scored 1,045 (not 1,046) runs in his 17-year major-league career. He was with Detroit for most of his career (1960–74) and actually scored 1,027 (not 1,028) runs for the Tigers. His 1,027 runs-scored total for the Tigers ranks ninth on their all-time list.[18]

Similarly, table 4 shows that Hank Greenberg actually scored 1,047 (not 1,051) runs during his major-league career. He was with the Tigers for every season except his final year (1947). In his Tigers career, he actually scored 976 (not 980) runs, which ranks tenth on Detroit's all-time list.[21]

Table 4 also shows that the two runs-scored corrections for Al Kaline (plus-one in 1954 and minus-one in 1959) canceled each other. Thus, his career runs-scored total (1,622) remains unchanged (as does his third-place ranking on the Tigers' all-time list).[18]

Finally, to return to the query posed at the outset of this article, table 4 also presents the overall accuracy of the career runs-scored statistics for those nineteen Tigers players for whom at least one runs-scored error was discovered for the 1945–2007 period.

The column "Career games" (X) gives the total number of games a player had in his major-league career.

The column "Runs-scored-error games" (Y) gives the total number of games in which there was a runs-scored error for the player.

The column "% correct runs-scored games" (Z) gives the corresponding percentage of games in which the runs-scored information for the player was accurate; see equation 1.

$$\text{Equation (1)} \quad Z = [(X - Y) / X] \times 100\%$$

As can be seen, for these particular players, the percentage of correct runs-scored games ranged from 99.41 to 99.95—pretty high numbers, but not the 100 percent correctness required for accurately determining the longest CGRUNS streaks. . . .

TABLE 3. Additional Runs-Scored Errors and Corrections for Detroit Tigers Players

Date	Player	Error	Correction	Player	Error	Correction
1935/8/28	Roxie Lawson	0	1	Hank Greenberg	1	0
1939/6/2	Dixie Walker	1	2	Hank Greenberg	2	1
1944/5/21 (1)	Eddie Mayo	0	2	Joe Hoover	2	0

TABLE 4. Career Runs-Scored Consequences for Detroit Tigers Players (1945–2007)

Player	Years	Correction (Career)	Career Runs-Scored Consequences	Career Games (X)	Runs-Scored-Error Games (Y)	% Correct Runs-Scored Games (Z)
Ray Boone	1948–60	1	644 (not 645)	1,373	1	99.93
Norm Cash	1958–74	1	1,045 (not 1,046)	2,089	1	99.95
Hoot Evers	1941–56	1	555 (not 556)	1,142	1	99.91
Hank Greenberg	1930–47	4	1,047 (not 1,051)	1,394	4	99.71
Fred Hatfield	1950–58	+ 1	260 (not 259)	722	1	99.86
Joe Hoover	1943–45	1	177 (not 178)	338	2	99.41
Frank House	1950–61	1	201 (not 202)	653	1	99.85
Al Kaline	1953–74	0	1,622 (unchanged)	2,834	2	99.93
George Kell	1943–57	1	880 (not 881)	1,795	1	99.94
Harvey Kuenn	1952–66	1	950 (not 951)	1,833	1	99.95
Eddie Lake	1939–50	+3	445 (not 442)	835	3	99.64
Johnny Lipon	1942–54	1	350 (not 351)	758	1	99.87
Charlie Maxwell	1950–64	+ 2	480 (not 478)	1,133	2	99.82
Eddie Mayo	1936–48	+ 2	352 (not 350)	834	3 (see note)	99.64
Pat Mullin	1940–53	+ 2	383 (not 381)	864	2	99.77
Hal Newhouser	1939–55	1	70 (not 71)	488	1	99.80
Bubba Phillips	1955–64	+1	349 (not 348)	1,062	1	99.91
Hub Walker	1931–45	+ 1	118 (not 117)	297	1	99.66
Skeeter Webb	1932–48	1	215 (not 216)	699	1	99.86

Note: One other runs-scored discrepancy between the box-score-generated information and the official DBD records was found for Mayo. For the second game on May 28, 1944, several newspaper box scores (those of the *Detroit News*, the *Detroit Free Press*, the *Detroit Times*, the *Washington Post*, *NYT*, and *TSN*) show Mayo with 2 runs scored, while the official DBD records show him with 3 runs scored. Unfortunately, none of the newspaper text accounts provides sufficient details on the 15 runs scored by the Tigers to allow for resolution of the discrepancy. Thus, the official DBD record must stand as is.

DISCUSSION

In order to ascertain the longest CGRUNS streaks for Detroit Tigers players during the 1945–2007 period, I first conducted a comprehensive investigation into the accuracy of the requisite official runs-scored records. I discovered—and corrected—a total of 26 runs-scored errors affecting 19 players.

The Elias Sports Bureau, after I provided the relevant documentation, approved each of the 26 runs-scored errors/corrections.[18–19]

In order to achieve a completely closed circuit for each of these 19 players, I extended my investigation to include their non-Tigers seasons and their pre-1945 seasons. I discovered—and corrected—6 more runs-scored errors affecting three of those 19 players.

The relevant documentation for these additional 6 runs-scored errors/corrections was provided to the Elias Sports Bureau for review. Elias authorized each of these corrections as well.[21]

While my comprehensive approach to achieving accurate runs-scored information resulted in the authorized corrections of these 32 runs-scored errors, another important question must be asked:

Were any runs-scored errors not uncovered by the modus operandi I employed?

The answer to this question is "Perhaps."

If there is a runs-scored error in both the newspaper box score and the corresponding official DBD record, the procedure I followed would not catch the error. For example, consider the Kaline–Maxwell runs-scored mixup in the first game of the Tigers–White Sox doubleheader on May 30, 1959. The box scores in the *NYT* and *TSN* agreed with the information in the official records for Kaline and Maxwell—that is, Kaline scored 1 run and Maxwell scored 0 runs, and thus the error was not discernible. Fortunately, I discovered the error by examining the daily records for Kaline and Maxwell in the Retrosheet database—which showed Kaline with 0 runs and Maxwell with 1 run. The Detroit newspapers (the *Detroit News*, the *Detroit Free Press*, and the *Detroit Times*) provided the details, which clearly showed that Maxwell had indeed scored 1 run and that Kaline had scored 0 runs—even though each of the Detroit newspaper box scores showed just the opposite! Curiously, the box score in the *Chicago Tribune* correctly showed Maxwell with 1 run and Kaline with 0 runs. So, while the newspaper-box-score approach is useful for discovering errors, it is not infallible. Perhaps other runs-scored errors analogous to the Kaline–Maxwell mixup will surface as the Retrosheet database is expanded to include seasons prior to 1954.

Along that line, as pointed out in the note to table 4, there can be runs-scored discrepancies between newspaper box scores and the official DBD records that may not be resolvable because the various newspaper text accounts do not provide sufficient information to describe unequivocally each run scored. For example, in the Completely Closed Circuit treatment of Eddie Mayo's career runs-scored record, I found a discrepancy between my newspaper-box-score-generated DBD record and the official DBD record for the second game of the doubleheader on May 28, 1944 (Detroit at Washington): The newspaper box scores show that Mayo scored 2 runs (and that Charlie Metro scored 2 runs), while the official DBD records credit Mayo with 3 runs (and Metro with 1 run). Because the Tigers scored 15 runs in that second game (after having scored 2 runs in the first game), it's understandable (especially during the World War II period) that the details of each run were not presented. Thus, the official DBD records must be considered correct.

With the reliable runs-scored information available from the research described in this article, I've been able to achieve the principal objective of my research program—to ascertain the longest single-season CGRUNS streak for each Tigers player for each year during the 1945–2007 period. The findings from that research are provided in a companion article (see page 123).[20]

With regard to future research, I have begun examining the accuracy of the runs-scored records for the Detroit Tigers players from the period 1920–44 (i.e., Phase Two). The results of that investigation—and the derived CGRUNS-streak findings—will be presented in due course.

In addition to my CGRUNS-streak research, I have concurrently been pursuing the determination of the longest Consecutive Games RUN Batted In (CGRUNBI) streak for each Detroit Tigers player for each season. Perhaps not surprisingly, I have discovered (and corrected) numerous RBI errors: 45 RBI errors involving 33 Tigers players (including three Cooperstown enshrinees) from the 1945–2007 period. (And, via my Completely Closed Circuit Principle, I unearthed an additional 54 RBI errors involving a total of 31 players, including five more Hall of Famers.) These RBI errors and the appropriate documentation for the corrections have been provided to the Elias Sports Bureau so that the appropriate changes can be officially sanctioned. The results of my research on the accuracy of the information and corrections of errors in the official RBI statistics (and the results of the derived CGRUNBI-streak research) will be presented in due course.[22]

CONCLUSION

I reiterate the tenet that I stated previously: The most critical aspect of conducting any research is the generation and use of accurate data. While the use of ballpark numbers may be satisfactory for some general discussions on the comparative performances of players, one will never be caught off base when using accurate numbers. Indeed, for accurate consecutive-game performances (such as my CGRUNS-streak research program), it is absolutely imperative that one have

and use accurate performance statistics (such as runs scored)—on a game-by-game basis—for each player being evaluated.

As part of my rigorous and systematic examination of the runs-scored statistics for the Detroit Tigers players for the 1945–2007 period, I discovered (and corrected) 26 runs-scored errors affecting 19 players. While these runs-scored errors represent only a very small percentage of the total runs scored by the players, they can be of paramount significance, as clearly demonstrated by the impact of the runs-scored errors in the official records of Hank Greenberg (in 1946) and Charlie Maxwell (in 1956).

From the results reported here for the Detroit Tigers, it is not unreasonable to imagine that there might be an analogous number of runs-scored errors for the players of the other major-league teams during the 1945–69 period. Accordingly, my hope is that others will pursue similar research efforts focused on their favorite teams. The results will produce a much more accurate record of baseball's runs-scored statistics.

Finally, in this article I have presented the unassailable supporting documentation that, in conjunction with my Completely Closed Circuit Principle, convinced the Elias Sports Bureau to sanction the changes in the official baseball records for the runs-scored statistics of nineteen players on the Detroit Tigers during the 1945–2007 period.[19–21] Thus, this article serves as the formal public disclosure of the authorized corrections/changes in the official runs-scored records—single season and career—for these 19 players, including four Hall of Fame members: Hank Greenberg, Hal Newhouser, George Kell, and Al Kaline. Accordingly, the appropriate corrections/changes can now be legitimately made in the various baseball encyclopedias, record books, information guides, and websites.[23] ∎

Notes

1. *The Baseball Encyclopedia*, 7th ed. (1988), shows (page 849) Eddie Collins with 115 runs in 1920.
2. *Sports Encyclopedia Baseball*, 9th ed. (1989), shows (page 124) Eddie Collins with 115 runs in 1920.
3. *Total Baseball*, 1st ed. (1989), shows (page 1031) Eddie Collins with 115 runs in 1920.
4. *The Baseball Encyclopedia*, 9th ed. (1993), shows (page 776) Eddie Collins with 117 runs in 1920; for a brief discussion about how David Stephan and Bill Deane (with assistance from Ron Rakowski) discovered the error, see pages viii and ix and also *Baseball Records Update 1993*, ed. L. Spatz (Cleveland: Society for American Baseball Research, 1993), 3, 17.
5. *The ESPN Baseball Encyclopedia*, 4th ed. (2007), shows (page 400) Eddie Collins with 117 runs in 1920.
6. *Sports Encyclopedia Baseball*, 26th ed. (2006), shows (page 124) Eddie Collins with 117 runs in 1920.
7. *Total Baseball*, 7th ed. (2000), shows (page 684) Eddie Collins with 117 runs in 1920.
8. There is still a lack of complete agreement with regard to the runs scored by Eddie Collins. According to information presented in *The Elias Book of Baseball Records* by S. Siwoff and published by the Elias Sports Bureau (the official statisticians for Major League Baseball), Eddie Collins has a career total of 1,820 runs; see, for example, page 409 of the 2006 edition. Collins is also shown with 1,820 career runs in reference 4 above and on the website of the National Baseball Hall of Fame (the statistics having been verified by the Elias Sports Bureau). However, several other sources show Collins with a total of 1,821 career runs; see, for example, the 2007 edition of *The Sporting News Baseball Record Book* (p. 114) and see also references 5, 6 (p. 94), and 7. The one-run difference appears to be due to the number of runs credited to Collins for the 1906 season. Some sources show Collins with 1 run scored—for example, references 2 and 4 show Collins with 1 run in 1906. On the other hand, references 5, 6 (page 33), and 7 show Collins with 2 runs in 1906. According to the box scores published in the *New York Times*, Collins (using the surname Sullivan) scored 2 runs in the six games he played in 1906: September 17 (0), September 18 (0), September 19 (0), September 24 (0), September 26 (1), September 28 (1).
9. H. Krabbenhoft, "Ted Williams' On-Base Performance in Consecutive Games," *The Baseball Research Journal*, no. 32 (2004): 41–46.
10. H. Krabbenhoft, "Record Holder—Barry Bonds Equals Another National League High Mark," *Baseball Digest* 63, no. 2 (February 2004): 34–37.
11. H. Krabbenhoft and T. McCotter, "Orlando Cabrera Joins Elite Group," *Baseball Digest* 65, no. 9 (November 2006): 62–65.
12. "H. Krabbenhoft, "The Phenomenal Achievement of Frank Lary—Premier Yankee Killer," *Baseball Quarterly Reviews* 1, no. 3 (fall 1986): 65–81. See also H. Krabbenhoft, "Normalized Winning Percentage (NWP)—Eddie Lopat vs. the Indians, Frank Lary vs. the Yankees," *The Baseball Research Journal*, no. 32 (2004): pages 114–16.
13. H. Krabbenhoft, "Charlie Maxwell—The Sunday Slugger," *Baseball Quarterly Reviews* 2, no. 2 (spring 1987): 84–99.
14. H. Krabbenhoft, "Fascinating Aspects About the Retired Uniform Numbers of the Detroit Tigers," *The National Pastime* 26 (2006): 71–84.
15. The official statisticians for the American League for the 1945–2007 period covered in this article were the Howe News Bureau (1945–72), the Sports Information Center (1973–86), and the Elias Sports Bureau (1987–2007).
16. R. Chamberlain, "SABR Nine Questions," *The SABR Bulletin*, July–August 2006, 6.
17. Personal communication (14 November 2006) from Dave Smith (Retrosheet)—in an e-mail message, Dave wrote: "At this point, I do not know of any errors on runs or RBI for any Tiger after 1970. If any arise, I will let you know immediately, since this will obviously impact your streak studies."
18. Personal communication (9 January 2007) with Steve Hirdt (Elias Sports Bureau)—in a telephone conversation with Mr. Hirdt, he informed me that Elias has accepted the corrections to all of the runs-scored errors presented in table 1 except for the one involving Eddie Lake and Johnny Lipon (in the game played September 29, 1946). He asked me to submit additional evidence to further support the documentation I had already provided.
19. Personal communication (26 January 2007) with Steve Hirdt (Elias Sports Bureau)—in a telephone conversation with Mr. Hirdt, he informed me that Elias has accepted the correction to the Lake–Lipon runs-scored error (in the game played September 29, 1946) based on the additional corroborative information I provided.
20. H. Krabbenhoft, "The Longest Streaks of Consecutive Games in Which a Detroit Tiger Scored a Run (1945–2008)," *The Baseball Research Journal* 37 (2008).

21. Personal communication (17 July 2006) from Steve Hirdt (Elias Sports Bureau)—in an e-mail message, Mr. Hirdt wrote: "Just confirming the changes to Greenberg's runs scored totals in the four seasons below [1935, 1939, 1945, 1946]. His career total is 1,047 (976 with Detroit)."
22. Some of the RBI errors/corrections that I discovered were described in my presentation "Corrections and Consecutive Games Streaks: Detroit (1945–2006)," given at the Society for American Baseball Research convention (SABR 37) in St. Louis on July 26–29, 2007.
23. Craig Muder (Director of Communications, National Baseball Hall of Fame and Museum) stated in an e-mail message (22 September 2008) to me that the museum will be updating the statistical information on its website to include the runs-scored corrections/changes approved by the Elias Sports Bureau for Hank Greenberg, George Kell, and Al Kaline.

Acknowledgments

The Longest Streaks of Consecutive Games in Which a Detroit Tiger Has Scored a Run

Herm Krabbenhoft

In another article (see page 115), I describe my findings on the accuracy of Major League Baseball's official runs-scored statistics for each Detroit Tigers player for the period 1945–2007.[1] There I report that I discovered—and corrected—26 runs-scored errors affecting 19 players, including four Hall of Famers. Subsequently the Elias Sports Bureau (the official statisticians for MLB), based on the indisputable supporting documentation I provided, approved each of the corrections/changes I proposed to the official baseball records.[1] Thus, having established an accurate, official game-by-game runs-scored database, I was able to ascertain reliably the longest Consecutive Games RUN Scored (CGRUNS) streak achieved by each Detroit Tigers player in each season during the period from 1945 to the present. The results of my CGRUNS streak research are described in the present article.[2]

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

The reported record for the longest CGRUNS streak in the American League is 18, currently held by Red Rolfe and Kenny Lofton.[3,4] Rolfe scored at least one run in 18 straight games for the New York Yankees during the 1939 season. Lofton tallied at least one marker in 18 consecutive games for the Cleveland Indians in 2000.[5] The record for the longest CGRUNS streak in the National League is 24, by Billy Hamilton of the 1894 Philadelphia club.[3,4] The modern (i.e., post-1900) National League record for the longest CGRUNS streak is 17, held by Rogers Hornsby and Ted Kluszewski.[3] Hornsby scored at least 1 run in each of 17 straight games for the St. Louis Cardinals in 1921. Kluszewski equaled that mark for the Cincinnati Redlegs in 1954.[6]

The record for the longest CGRUNS streak for the Detroit Tigers has apparently not been previously reported.

RESEARCH PROCEDURES

In order to manage my longest CGRUNS streak project efficiently, I divided the hundred-plus years of Tigers history into three periods: 1945–present, which I call Phase One; 1920–44, which I call Phase Two; and 1901–19, which I call Phase Three. This article deals with Phase One.

To ensure that my determinations of the longest CGRUNS streaks were accurate, I enlisted the help of Dave Smith of Retrosheet and asked him to write a computer program that would extract the longest CGRUNS streaks for each MLB player in each season of the Retrosheet database (1957–2006 at that time) according to the following criteria:

Games included:
- any games in which the player had at least one plate appearance
- any games in which the player was a pinch-runner

Games excluded:
- any games in which the player was used only as a fielder
- any games in which the player was announced as a pinch-hitter but was then replaced by another pinch-hitter

Dave graciously wrote the requested program. By comparing my manually generated CGRUNS-streak results with his computer-generated results for the 1957–69 Detroit Tigers, he was able to eliminate the few kinks and glitches that cropped up in the early versions of his program, and I was able to correct a handful of transcription errors I had made in compiling the results from the corrected official day-by-day (DBD) records (and the Retrosheet daily records).

Before proceeding to the results of my CGRUNS-streak research, I should explain the criteria I used to ascertain what constitutes a CGRUNS streak (or, in other words, what terminates a CGRUNS streak). The official rules of Major League Baseball do not specifically cover CGRUNS streaks.[7] Therefore, I used the following guidelines to define the extension or termination of a CGRUNS streak:

If a player scores at least one run in a game, that game extends the CGRUNS streak.

If a player completes at least one plate appearance in a game but does not score at least one run, that game terminates the CGRUNS streak.[8]

If a player is used only as a pinch-runner in a game and does not score at least one run, that game terminates the CGRUNS streak.

If a player is used only as a defensive player in a game (and thus does not have a completed plate appearance), that game does not terminate the CGRUNS streak.

If a player is announced as a pinch-hitter and is then replaced by another pinch-hitter (and thus does not have a completed plate appearance), that game does not terminate

the CGRUNS streak. Similarly, if a player enters the game as a pinch-hitter, but, before he can complete his plate appearance, the inning ends via a caught-stealing or a pickoff, that game does not terminate the CGRUNS streak.

The critical aspect to these guidelines is that, if a player had at least one opportunity to score a run in a game, he must have scored at least one run in that game in order to extend his CGRUNS streak; if he had at least one opportunity to score a run in a game and did not score at least one run in that game, his CGRUNS streak terminated.[8]

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Table 1 lists the player(s) who assembled the longest CGRUNS streak for the Tigers in each season during the period 1945 through 2008. To provide some perspective, I've included the players who put together the longest CGRUNS streak from each league for each season.

For the AL (1954–2008) and the NL (1953–2008), Dave Smith's Retrosheet database program identified the players who assembled the longest CGRUNS streak for each league in each season. In addition, the "Streak Finder" tool at Baseball-Reference.com was used to ensure that no errors were made in transcribing the CGRUNS-streak information.

For the period 1945–52/'53 period, I examined the official day-by-day records of players deemed "likely to have assembled a significant CGRUNS streak." The domain of "likely players" for each league consisted of the top 60 players in most runs scored (i.e., generally all players with at least 35 runs scored). Two important points with regard to AL and NL leaders in longest CGRUNS streaks for the 1945–52/'53 period: because (A) the domains did not include every player in the league (as was the case for the domains with the Retrosheet database program) and (B) the accuracy of the runs-scored statistics in the official records of the players was unverified, the leaders presented in the columns for the AL (1945–53) and the NL (1945–52) have not yet been absolutely determined.[9] Accordingly, those players are presented in italic (except for the 1947 NL leader, Johnny Mize, who according to other sources [reference 6] is the absolute leader and therefore not italicized).

Table 1 shows that in 1950 Johnny Groth compiled the longest CGRUNS streak during the 1945–2008 period for the Detroit Tigers—he scored at least 1 run in 13 straight games from August 14 through August 26.

Note that using the *uncorrected* official DBD records yields a different result. According to those records, Hank Greenberg had a 14-CGRUNS streak in 1946—from September 14 through September 28. However, the Greenberg–Mullin mixup error in the game of

TABLE 1. The Tigers with the Longest CGRUNS Streaks (1945–2008); AL and NL Leaders in CGRUNS Streaks

Year	Tigers Player	STRK	AL Player (Team)	STRK	NL Player (Team)	STRK
1945	Doc Cramer	9	*Mickey Rocco (CLE)*	*11*	*Tommy Holmes (BOS)*	*12*
1946	Hank Greenberg	10	*Ted Williams (BOS)*	*13*	*Bama Rowell (BOS)*	*9*
1947	Hoot Evers	9	*Tommy Henrich (NY)*	*11*	Johnny Mize (NY)	16
1948	Eddie Lake	8	*Tommy Henrich (NY)*	*10*	*Wally Westlake (PIT)*	*13*
			Johnny Pesky (BOS)	*10*		
1949	Vic Wertz	7	*Eddie Joost (PHI)*	*11*	*Johnny Hopp (PIT)*	*11*
1950	Johnny Groth	13	*Johnny Groth (DET)*	*13*	*Roy Hartsfield (BOS)*	*15*
			Don Lenhardt (STL)	*13*		
1951	Vic Wertz	6	*Nellie Fox (CHI)*	*12*	*Alvin Dark (NY)*	*11*
	George Kell	6			*Wes Westrum (NY)*	*11*
	Jerry Priddy	6				
1952	Walt Dropo	5	*Minnie Miñoso (CHI)*	*9*	*Stan Musial (STL)*	*9*
	Russ Sullivan	5	*Nellie Fox (CHI)*	*9*		
1953	Ray Boone	10	*Mickey Mantle (NY)*	*14*	Gil Hodges (BRK)	12
1954	Ray Boone	5	Nellie Fox (CHI)	10	Ted Kluszewski (CIN)	17
1955	Red Wilson	6	Mickey Mantle (NY)	11	Roy Campanella (BRK)	9
	Earl Torgeson	6			Ted Kluszewski (CIN)	9
	Harvey Kuenn	6			Johnny Logan (MIL)	9
	Bill Tuttle	6				
1956	Harvey Kuenn	8	Mickey Mantle (NY)	10	Hank Aaron (MIL)	13
1957	Charlie Maxwell	7	Gil McDougald (NY)	10	Don Blasingame (STL)	12
1958	Frank Bolling	8	Mickey Mantle (NY)	9	Hank Aaron (MIL)	10
1959	Red Wilson	7	Sherm Lollar (CHI)	9	Willie Mays (SF)	14
1960	Charlie Maxwell	9	Mickey Mantle (NY)	10	Billy Bruton (MIL)	14
1961	Rocky Colavito	12	Rocky Colavito (DET)	12	Bill Virdon (PIT)	10
					Orlando Cepeda (SF)	10
1962	Al Kaline	7	Billy Moran (LA)	9	Hank Aaron (MIL)	11

TABLE 1. (cont.)

Year	Tigers Player	STRK	AL Player (Team)	STRK	NL Player (Team)	STRK
1963	Jake Wood	8	Roger Maris (NY)	9	Julián Javier (STL)	11
1964	Jerry Lumpe	11	Rich Rollins (MIN)	12	Roberto Clemente (PIT)	9
1965	Jerry Lumpe	9	Leon Wagner (CLE)	10	Felipe Alou (MIL)	12
			Russ Snyder (BAL)	10		
1966	Dick McAuliffe	6	Frank Robinson (BAL)	11	Dick Allen (PHI)	10
			Jimmie Hall (MIN)	11		
1967	Gates Brown	7	Brooks Robinson (BAL)	9	Mack Jones (ATL)	11
	Al Kaline	7	Tony Conigliaro (BOS)	9		
1968	Al Kaline	6	Reggie Jackson (OAK)	10	Curt Flood (STL)	12
	Jim Northrup	6				
1969	Mickey Stanley	6	Carl Yastrzemski (BOS)	10	Glenn Beckert (CHI)	10
	Norm Cash	6				
	Jim Northrup	6				
1970	Mickey Stanley	6	Tommy Harper (BOS)	13	Bobby Bonds (SF)	11
1971	Willie Horton	7	Roy White (NY)	8	Lou Brock (STL)	10
	Norm Cash	7				
1972	Al Kaline	8	Al Kaline (DET)	8	Jimmy Wynn (HOU)	11
1973	Al Kaline	4	Tommy Harper (BOS)	10	Hank Aaron (ATL)	10
	Willie Horton	4				
	Gates Brown	4				
	Duke Sims	4				
	Mickey Stanley	4				
	Jim Northrup	4				
1974	Willie Horton	6	Dick Allen (CHI)	8	Lou Brock (STL)	8
	Eddie Brinkman	6			Ron Cey (LA)	8
					Garry Maddox (SF)	8
					Willie Stargell (PIT)	8
					Pete Rose (CIN)	8
					Rick Monday (CHI)	8
1975	Ron LeFlore	6	Fred Lynn (BOS)	9	Davey Lopes (LA)	9
	Dan Meyer	6	Amos Otis (KC)	9	Jerry Morales (CHI)	9
	Ben Oglivie	6			Mike Schmidt (PHI)	9
					Rennie Sennett (PIT)	9
1976	Ron LeFlore	9	Ron LeFlore (DET)	9	Mike Schmidt (PHI)	12
			George Brett (KC)	9		
1977	Rusty Staub	6	Chris Chambliss (NY)	10	George Foster (CIN)	10
	Tito Fuentes	6	Ralph Garr (CHI)	10		
	Ron LeFlore	6				
1978	Ron LeFlore	9	Mickey Rivers (NY)	10	Andre Dawson (MON)	10
1979	Ron LeFlore	9	Mike Hargrove (CLE)	12	Billy North (SF)	12
1980	Alan Trammell	7	Mickey Rivers (TEX)	10	Ken Griffey (CIN)	9
	Rick Peters	7	Rickey Henderson (OAK)	10		
	Tom Brookens	7				
1981	Steve Kemp	7	Rickey Henderson (OAK)	10	Mike Schmidt (PHI)	10
1982	Lou Whitaker	8	Dwight Evans (BOS)	12	Bob Horner (ATL)	15
1983	Lou Whitaker	6	Paul Molitor (MIL)	11	Mike Schmidt (PHI)	9
	Alan Trammell	6			Larry Bowa (CHI)	9
					Bill Madlock (PIT)	9
1984	Kirk Gibson	7	Juan Beníquez (CAL)	10	Bob Brenly (SF)	13
1985	Alan Trammell	6	Rickey Henderson (NY)	10	Eric Davis (CIN)	9
	Lou Whitaker		Oddibe McDowell (TEX)	10		
	Darrell Evans	6				
1986	Darrell Evans	8	Kirby Puckett (MIN)	14	Steve Sax (LA)	9
			Lloyd Moseby (TOR)	14		
1987	Alan Trammell	9	Paul Molitor (MIL)	16	Will Clark (SF)	11
1988	Gary Pettis	6	Wade Boggs BOS)	11	Ron Gant (ATL)	10
1989	Gary Pettis	7	Wade Boggs (BOS)	10	Kevin Mitchell (SF)	9
	Keith Moreland	7			Will Clark (SF)	9
					Jerome Walton (CHI)	9

TABLE 1. (cont.)

Year	Tigers Player	STRK	AL Player (Team)	STRK	NL Player (Team)	STRK
					Jack Clark (SD)	9
1990	Lou Whitaker	7	Sandy Alomar Jr. (CLE)	10	Will Clark (SF)	13
1991	Tony Phillips	7	José Canseco (OAK)	12	Bobby Bonilla (PIT)	10
	Rob Deer	7				
1992	Dan Gladden	10	Dan Gladden (DET)	10	Bip Roberts (CIN)	11
1993	Lou Whitaker	9	Chad Curtis (CAL)	11	Lenny Dykstra (PHI)	15
	Tony Phillips	9				
1994	Junior Félix	10	Frank Thomas (CHI)	14	Ray Lankford (STL)	13
	Mickey Tettleton	10	Mike Stanley (NY)	14		
1995	Travis Fryman	8	Jim Edmonds (CAL)	13	Eric Young (COL)	11
1996	Bobby Higginson	10	Greg Vaughn (MIL)	14	Steve Finley (SD)	15
			Kenny Lofton (CLE)	14		
1997	Damion Easley	8	Jim Edmonds (ANA)	11	Andres Galarraga (COL)	12
1998	Joe Randa	7	Nomar Garciaparra (BOS)	12	Jeff Kent (SF)	13
1999	Dean Palmer	11	Ray Durham (CHI)	11	Travis Lee (ARZ)	11
			Dean Palmer (DET)	11	Reggie Sanders (SD)	11
2000	Bobby Higginson	8	Kenny Lofton (CLE)	18	Derek Bell (NY)	11
2001	Damion Easley	6	Roberto Alomar (CLE)	10	Albert Pujols (STL)	13
	Bobby Higginson	6				
	José Macías	6				
2002	Damian Jackson	6	Kenny Lofton (CHI)	14	Shawn Green (LA)	11
2003	Carlos Peña	6	Alfonso Soriano (NY)	10	Rafael Furcal (ATL)	10
	Craig Monroe	6	Brett Boone (SEA)	10	Barry Bonds (SF)	10
	Dmitri Young	6				
2004	Carlos Peña	7	Johnny Damon (BOS)	11	Carlos Beltrán (HOU)	15
			Derek Jeter (NY)	11		
2005	Brandon Inge	7	Michael Young (TEX)	11	Craig Counsell (ARZ)	11
					Bobby Abreu (PHI)	11
					Nick Johnson (WAS)	11
2006	Plácido Polanco	8	Jim Thome (CHI)	17	Carlos Beltrán (NY)	12
2007	Gary Sheffield	9	Hideki Matsui (NY)	11	Rickie Weeks (MIL)	13
2008	Curtis Granderson	8	Ian Kinsler (TEX)	11	Lance Berkman (HOU)	15
					Matt Holliday (COL)	15

September 18, 1946 (as described in the companion article) affects directly the identity of the player who assembled the longest CGRUNS streak for the Tigers during the 1945–2007 period.[1] Thus, Greenberg did not score a run in the September 18 game, and therefore his longest CGRUNS streak in 1946 was actually 10 games, not 14. And, because Greenberg did not have a bona fide 14-CGRUNS streak in 1946, Ted Williams actually assembled the longest CGRUNS streak—a 13-gamer (verified by newspaper box scores) in the AL/NL that season.

Next in line behind Groth for the longest CGRUNS streaks by Tigers players are Rocky Colavito (12 in 1961), Jerry Lumpe (11 in 1964), Dean Palmer (11 in 1999), Greenberg (10 in 1946), Ray Boone (10 in 1953), Dan Gladden (10 in 1992), Junior Félix (10 in 1994), Mickey Tettleton (10 in 1994), and Bobby Higginson (10 in 1996).

The Detroit Tigers players who captured the most trophies for the longest CGRUNS streak (among Tigers players) during the 1945–2008 period are Al Kaline, Ron LeFlore, and Lou Whitaker, who claimed five blue ribbons each.

Next in line behind Kaline, LeFlore, and Whitaker for the most CGRUNS crowns for the Tigers are Alan Trammell (4), Jim Northrup (3), Mickey Stanley (3), Willie Horton (3), and Bobby Higginson (3). You can also see that a Tigers player compiled the longest CGRUNS streak among all American League players five times during the 1954–2008 period—Colavito (12 in 1961), Kaline (8 in 1972), LeFlore (9 in 1976), Gladden (10 in 1992), and Palmer (11 in 1999). The CGRUNS streaks achieved by Colavito in 1961 and by Palmer in 1999 were also the longest in the major leagues those years.

With regard to the information on the non-Tigers players provided in table 1, it may be of interest to point out the following: The AL players with the three longest CGRUNS streaks during the 1954–2008 period are Kenny Lofton (18 in 2000), Jim Thome (17 in 2006), and Paul Molitor (16 in 1987). In terms of having assembled the longest CGRUNS streak the most times, Mickey Mantle leads the way with four crowns—11 in 1955, 10 in 1956, 9 in 1958, and 10 in 1960. The "Commerce Comet" also fashioned the longest (currently known) CGRUNS streak for the AL in 1953 with 14.

The NL players with the longest CGRUNS streaks during the 1953–2008 period are Ted Kluszewski (17 in 1954), Bob Horner (15 in 1982), Lenny Dykstra (15 in 1993), Carlos Beltrán (15 in 2004), Lance Berkman (15 in 2008), and Matt Holliday (15 in 2008). With respect to being the longest-CGRUNS-streak leader the most times, Hank Aaron and Mike Schmidt each captured the longest-CGRUNS-streak throne four times—Aaron with 13 in 1956, 10 in 1958, 11 in 1962, and 10 in 1973; Schmidt with 9 in 1975 (in a four-way tie), 12 in 1976, 10 in 1981, and 9 in 1983 (in a three-way tie).

For comparison, table 2 presents the MLB team player(s) who assembled the longest CGRUNS streak during the past 55 years. The information in table 2 is derived from the results generated by Dave Smith's database program.

Because the current Retrosheet database includes all seasons—and, therefore, all players—from 1954 onward, the team leaders for the "expansion" clubs (i.e., the Angels, Rangers [including the 1961–72 Washington Senators], Royals, Brewers [including the 1969 Seattle

TABLE 2. Players Who Had the Longest CGRUNS Streak for Each ML Team (AL, 1954–2008; NL, 1953–2008)

AL Team	Player(s) (Year)	CGRUNS Streak	NL Team	Player(s) (Year)	CGRUNS Streak
Orioles	Frank Robinson (1966)	11	Dodgers	Gil Hodges (1953)	12
Red Sox	Darrell Evans (1982)	12	Cubs	Rick Monday (1976)	11
	Nomar Garciaparra (1998)	12			
White Sox	Jim Thome (2006)	17	Reds	Ted Kluszewski (1954)	17
Indians	Kenny Lofton (2000)	18	Braves	Bob Horner (1982)	15
Tigers	Rocky Colavito (1961)	12	Giants	Willie Mays (1959)	14
Athletics	José Canseco (1991)	12	Phillies	Lenny Dykstra (1993)	15
	Mark McGwire (1995)	12			
Yankees	Mike Stanley (1994)	14	Pirates	Turner Ward (1997)	11
Twins	Kirby Puckett (1986)	14	Cardinals	Ray Lankford (1994)	13
				Albert Pujols (2001)	13
Angels	Jim Edmonds (1995)	13	Astros	Carlos Beltrán (2004)	15
				Lance Berkman (2008)	15
Rangers	Michael Young (2005)	11	Mets	David Wright (2008)	13
	Ian Kinsler (2008)	11			
Royals	Johnny Damon (2000)	14	Nationals	Nick Johnson (2005)	11
Brewers	Paul Molitor (1987)	16	Padres	Steve Finley (1996)	15
Mariners	Ken Griffey (1996)	12	Rockies	Matt Holliday (2008)	15
	Raúl Ibáñez (2006)	12			
Blue Jays	Lloyd Moseby (1986)	14	Marlins	Dan Uggla (2007)	10
Rays	Alex Sanchez (2005)	10	D-Backs	Travis Lee (1999)	
				Craig Counsell (2005)	11
			Brewers	Rickie Weeks (2007)	13

On September 18, 1946, a pinch-runner ran for Hank Greenberg after he doubled, a move that cut short Greenberg's streak of games in which he scored a run. Otherwise his streak would have been 14, the longest in the American League that year. His streak stopped at 10, and Ted Williams led the league that year at 13 games. In 1940, Greenberg put together a 15-game streak, a club record. He ranks tenth on the club's all-time list for runs scored (976).

127

Pilots], Mariners, Blue Jays, and Rays in the American League, and the Astros, Mets, Nationals [including the 1969–2004 Montreal Expos], Padres, Marlins, Rockies, Diamondbacks, and Brewers in the National League) are the absolute all-time team leaders.

With respect to the all-time team leaders for the longest CGRUNS streak for the "original" MLB clubs (i.e., the Orioles [including the 1901 Milwaukee Brewers and the 1902–53 St. Louis Browns], Red Sox, White Sox, Indians, Tigers, Athletics [including the 1901–54 Philadelphia and 1955–67 Kansas City franchises], Yankees [including the 1901–2 Baltimore Orioles], and Twins [including the 1901–60 Washington Senators] in the junior circuit, and the Dodgers [including the 1901–57 Brooklyn franchise], Cubs, Reds, Braves [including the 1901–52 Boston and 1953–65 Milwaukee franchises], Giants [including the 1901–57 New York franchise), Phillies, Pirates, and Cardinals in the senior loop), table 3 presents the information I've obtained by examining the official DBD records of more than 3,000 player-seasons for players deemed likely to have had a substantial CGRUNS streak during the period 1901–53.

I must point out that, because I have not yet checked the official DBD records of every MLB player from the 1901–53 period, the players listed in table 3 are merely those currently *known by me* to have the longest CGRUNS streaks for their team.[10] Nonetheless, table 3 is an interesting list of players, nine of whom have been elected to the Hall of Fame.

Of particular interest to me is my finding that Hank Greenberg of the 1940 Tigers achieved a 15-CGRUNS streak—verified by newspaper box scores. Greenberg's 15-CGRUNS streak is two games longer than the 13-gamer that Johnny Groth put together in 1950.

CONCLUSION
For Phase One of my program to ascertain the longest CGRUNS streak for each Detroit Tigers player, I found that Johnny Groth assembled the longest CGRUNS streak during the 1945–2008 period (table 1). For comparison, I also identified the player(s) who put together the longest CGRUNS streak for each league. And, for additional perspective, I also determined the player(s) with the longest all-time CGRUNS streak *currently known* for each major-league team (tables 2 and 3).

Johnny Mize, shown here early in his career with the Cardinals, scored in 16 consecutive games for the Giants in 1947—a club record and good for second place in the National League.

Concurrent with my research on the longest CGRUNS streaks for the 1945–2008 Detroit Tigers, I have also pursued the longest Consecutive RUN Batted In (CGRUNBI) streaks. The results of that investigation will be published in due course.[11] ■

Acknowledgments

TABLE 3. Players with the Longest Known CGRUNS Streak for Each "Original" MLB Team (1901–2008)

AL Team	Player(s) (Year)	CGRUNS Streak	NL Team	Player(s) (Year)	CGRUNS Streak
Orioles	Jack Tobin (1921)	17	Dodgers	ZackWheat (1925)	13
Red Sox	Ted Williams (1946)	13	Cubs	Rick Monday (1976)	11
White Sox	Jim Thome (2006)	17	Reds	Ted Kluszewski (1954)	17
Indians	Kenny Lofton (2000)	18	Braves	Roy Hartsfield (1950)	15
				Bob Horner (1982)	15
Tigers	Hank Greenberg (1940)	15	Giants	Johnny Mize (1947)	16
Athletics	Al Simmons (1930)	13	Phillies	Lenny Dykstra (1993)	15
	Jimmie Foxx (1932)	13			
Yankees	Red Rolfe (1939)	18	Pirates	Max Carey (1924)	15
Twins	Kirby Puckett (1986)	14	Cardinals	Rogers Hornsby (1921)	17

Notes

The longest CGRUNS streak information for the years 1953/1954–2008 presented in tables 1 and 3 and all of the longest CGRUNS streak information presented in table 2 was obtained free of charge from and is copyrighted by Retrosheet. Interested parties may contact Retrosheet through its website, www.retrosheet.org.

1. H. Krabbenhoft, "The Authorized Corrections of Runs-Scored Errors in the Official Baseball Records (1945–2007) for Detroit Tigers Players," *Baseball Research Journal* 37 (2008).

2. Some of the results described here were first announced in presentations at the meeting of the Don Lund SABR Chapter in Detroit (H. Krabbenhoft, "Charlie Maxwell—Still Scoring Runs for the Tigers," 24 February 2007) and at the SABR National Convention in St. Louis (H. Krabbenhoft, "Approved Corrections to the Official Baseball Records for Runs and RBI by Detroit Tigers Players [1945–2006]," 26–29 July 2007).

3. S. Siwoff, *The Elias Book of Baseball Records* (New York: Elias Sports Bureau, 2008), 12.

4. *The Complete Baseball Record and Fact Book*, ed. S. Gietschier (St. Louis: Sporting News Books, 2008), 18.

5. For a time, Nellie Fox was credited with the AL record. Thus in the 1956 and 1957 editions of *One for the Book* (the direct precursor of *The Complete Baseball Record and Fact Book*), Nellie Fox of the Chicago White Sox was listed as the AL record holder with a 19-CGRUNS streak in 1954 (May 21 through June 9). However, in the 1958 edition (and all subsequent editions), Rolfe was again listed as the AL record holder. Similarly, in the 1957–64 editions of *The Little Red Book of Baseball* (the direct precursor of *The Elias Book of Baseball Records*), Nellie Fox was listed as the AL record holder with a 19-CGRUNS streak in 1954. However, in the 1965 edition (and all subsequent editions), Rolfe was again listed as the AL record holder. In actuality, Fox had an 8-CGRUNS streak (May 21 through May 29) and a 10-CGRUNS streak (May 31 through June 9); he did not score a run in the game he played on May 30.

6. Prior to my CGRUNS-streak-research efforts, Ted Kluszewski was credited as being the sole holder of the post-1900 record for the longest CGRUNS streak in the National League. Thus, in the 2007 edition of *The Elias Book of Baseball Records* (12), only Kluszewski was listed. That was the case for all previous editions (i.e., all the way back to the 1972 edition) as well as its direct precursor (*The Little Red Book of Baseball*), all the way back to the 1955 edition. In the 1948–54 editions of *The Little Red Book of Baseball*, Johnny Mize is listed as the sole holder of the NL record for the longest CGRUNS streak: 16 games in 1947. In the 1934–47 editions, Max Carey (in 1924) and Fred Lindstrom (in 1927) are listed as coholders of the NL record for the longest CGRUNS streak: 15 games. In the 1929–33 editions, Carey is listed as the sole holder of the NL record for the longest CGRUNS streak: 15 games in 1924. The record for scoring runs in consecutive games was not included in the 1926–28 editions. On January 28, 2007, while examining the 1921 official DBD records of Rogers Hornsby, I discovered that he had a 17-CGRUNS streak (July 3 through July 20). I proceeded to confirm the findings in the official DBD records by reference to the box scores presented in the *New York Times* as well as in the Retrosheet database. I communicated this information via e-mail (28 January 2007) to Seymour Siwoff of the Elias Sports Bureau. Seymour contacted me on January 29 and informed me that pursuant to my message he had just finished his own in-house box-score check and that it had corroborated my finding that Hornsby did indeed have a 17-CGRUNS streak in 1921. Unfortunately, Hornsby's post-1900 NL-record 17-CGRUNS streak was inadvertently omitted in the 2008 edition of *The Elias Book of Baseball Records* (12). Fortunately, it is scheduled to be included in the 2009 edition.

7. *The Official Baseball Rules* (copyright 2008 by the Commissioner of Baseball) are available online at mlb.com. "Rule 10.23 Guidelines for Cumulative Performance Record" deals with consecutive streaks: consecutive hitting streaks, consecutive-game hitting streaks, and consecutive-game playing streaks. There is no reference to consecutive-game run-scoring streaks. With regard to consecutive-game hitting streaks, the rules state, "A consecutive-game hitting streak shall not be terminated if all of a batter's plate appearances (one or more) in a game result in a base on balls, hit batsman, defensive interference or obstruction or a sacrifice bunt. The streak shall terminate if the player has a sacrifice fly and no hit." With regard to consecutive-game playing streaks, the rules state, "A consecutive-game playing streak shall be extended if a player plays one half-inning on defense or if the player completes a time at bat by reaching base or being put out. A pinch running appearance only shall not extend the streak."

8. There can be situations in which a player completes at least one plate appearance in a game without scoring a run and yet that game does not terminate the CGRUNS streak. For example, consider the following scenario: The player is used as a pinch-hitter and gets on base by being hit by a pitch on the first pitch he receives; the player is then immediately replaced by a pinch-runner. Because the player did not have an opportunity to score a run (the ball is dead upon hitting the batter), that game does not terminate his CGRUNS streak. Another special case is when the player is used as a pinch-hitter and completes his sole plate appearance by hitting a sacrifice bunt. An argument can be made that, because a sacrifice bunt does not terminate a consecutive-game hitting streak (rule 10.23 (B)—see note 7 above), a sacrifice bunt should not terminate a CGRUNS streak. Nonetheless, for the CGRUNS-streaks research reported here, if a player had only one plate appearance in a game and that plate appearance was completed via a sacrifice bunt, that game did terminate the CGRUNS streak. My rationale for this is as follows: If a player in his only plate appearance completes a sacrifice bunt and simultaneously reaches first base as the result of an error and then subsequently scores, his CGRUNS streak would be extended; analogously, if he did not subsequently score, his CGRUNS streak would terminate. The player decides whether or not to attempt a sacrifice bunt, either on his own or on the instruction of his manager. Choosing to attempt a sacrifice bunt may be the correct strategy to follow for the betterment of the player's team. But doing so does terminate the player's CGRUNS streak (unless he gets on base via an error and then scores)—which is fine and proper: An individual achievement is (should) always (be) secondary to the team's primary objective—scoring enough runs to win the game.

9. For example, using the uncorrected 1955 official DBD records results in Willie Mays' being credited with a CGRUNS streak of 9, which was the longest CGRUNS streak in the National League (also achieved by Roy Campanella, Ted Kluszewski, and Johnny Logan). The official DBD records for Mays show that he scored at least one run in each of the 9 games he played from September 11 through September 21 [9–11, 13, 14, 16, 17, 18, 20(1), 20(2), 21(1)]. However, according to the Retrosheet daily records, Mays did not score any runs in the first game on September 21. That Mays did not score a run in the September 21(1) game is corroborated by the complete play-by-play information (Retrosheet), the game account given in the *New York Times*, and the box score provided in *The Sporting News* (28 September 1955, page 30).

10. For a list of players "Most Consecutive Games Scoring a Run, since 1893," see *The SABR Baseball List and Record Book: Baseball's Most Fascinating Records and Unusual Statistics*, ed. L. Spatz (New York: Scribner, 2007), 144. The list consists of 16 players credited with CGRUNS streaks of at least 17 games (although Jack Tobin's 17-CGRUNS streak for the 1921 St. Louis Browns is not included); 11 of the 16 players achieved their streaks prior to 1900, including the all-time leader Billy Hamilton—a 24-CGRUNS streak with the 1894 Philadelphia NL club. With regard to Jack Tobin's 17-CGRUNS streak in 1921 (May 16–May 31), my examination of the official AL scoresheets and the pertinent box scores presented in the *New York Times* shows 100 percent agreement.

11. H. Krabbenhoft, "The Longest Consecutive Games RUN Batted In streaks by Detroit Tigers Players (1945–2007)," manuscript in preparation.

Corrections

Batting Four Thousand: Baseball in the Western Reserve—SABR convention journal (Cleveland), 2008

"Jesse Burkett: Cleveland's Forgotten Legend," by Mark Hodermarsky, 16–18. Page 17: The description of changes in the pitching distance involved two errors. There was no pitcher's mound in 1893. And 60 feet, 6 inches, the new, longer pitching distance established that year, remains in use as the distance not from the mound to the plate but, more precisely, from the front of the pitching rubber to the rear of home plate.

"Keeping the Federals at Bay: Cleveland in the American Association, 1914–1915," by Marshall Wright, 19–21. Page 20: The year that the Cleveland Spiders of the National League played a disproportionate number of their games on the road is 1899.

"It Was 'Smoky' in Cleveland," by Rick Huhn, 28–30. Page 30: The manager of the Indians in spring training in 1919 was Lee Fohl. Tris Speaker did not succeed him until midseason.

"A Moment of Silence: Remembering Herb Score," by Bill Barry, 77–80. Page 77: Neither Johnny Sain nor Allie Reynolds were on the Yankees' roster on June 26, 1955—by then, Sain had been traded to the Kansas City Athletics, and Allie Reynolds had retired after the 1954 season.

"The Iron-Armed Pitcher: Stanley Coveleski's Nineteen-Inning Complete-Game Victory," by Fred Schuld, 84–90. Page 84: It was 1918 when the season ended a month early, and 1919 when the season was shortened to 140 games.

"Bonesetter Reese: Baseball's Unofficial Team Physician," by Dave Anderson, 99–103. Page 102: In his time, Honus Wagner was more commonly known as Hans.

The National Pastime, volume 28, 2008

"The 'Little World Series' of 1922: The Most Hearbreaking Loss in St. Louis History," by Steve Steinberg, 7–14. Page 14, endnote 5: June 15 was the new trade deadline that Major League Baseball established for the 1923 season, moving it up from July 31.

"Analyzing Grand Old Images: A Close Look at Two Photos from the Deadball Era," by Mark Fimoff, 15–25. Page 16: The uniform illustration on the right is of the Phillies' uniform. The caption should read "Phi NL 1915–1919."

"Henry Chadwick: The 'Father of Baseball' Was a Sportswriter," by Andrew J. Schiff, 26–29. Page 29: There is no separate writers' or players' wing of the Hall of Fame. Henry Chadwick is the only journalist inducted into the Hall of Fame.

"The Deaf and the Origin of Hand Signals in Baseball," by Randy Fisher and Jami N. Fisher, 35–39. Page 35: The Cubs were world champions not only in 1908 but also in 1907 and, before the modern era, in 1876, 1880, and 1881. Reference to the Cubs' 1908 season was added by the editor, who bears responsibility for the error.

"But the Polo Grounds Belonged to the Giants: An Interview with Bobby Thomson," by Tom Harris, 68–77: This article was adapted from an interview that was transcribed by J. Thomas Hetrick, who was not acknowledged but should have been. Page 64: The correct spelling of the name is Gino Cimoli.

"A Bitter Rivalry Recalled: The Cleveland Indians and the New York Yankees, 1947–1956," by James E. Odenkirk, 78–86. Page 79: Gordon Cobbledick and Hal Lebovitz were not elected to the Hall of Fame. Both did win the J. G. Taylor Spink Award from the Hall of Fame.

"Farmer Hal from Yoncalla: Hal Turpin of the Pacific Coast League," by Eric Sallee, Dave Eskenazi, and Dave Baldwin, 113–18. Eric Sallee's name was misspelled.

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